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THE  
BURKE AND WILLS

EXPLORING EXPEDITION:

AN ACCOUNT

OF THE

CROSSING THE CONTINENT OF AUSTRALIA,

FROM

COOPER'S CREEK TO CARPENTARIA,

WITH

Portraits and Biographical Sketches

OF

ROBERT O'BARA BURKE, AND WILLIAM JOHN WILLS.

MELBOURNE :

WILSON AND MACINNON, 78, COLLINS STREET EAST.

1861

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*William John Wells*



*R. Allan. Butler*  
*Leader*





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1861.

Bt. from F. Edwards



## THE BURKE AND WILLS EXPLORING EXPEDITION.

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This pamphlet is not put forth as a history of the Exploring Expedition. It is but the last chapter of a sad history: the thrilling narrative of the successful but fatal feat of crossing the continent of Australia, by Burke, Wills, Gray, and King. To understand it, however, it will be necessary to bear in mind a few facts connected with that history.

On the 20th of August, 1860, the Expedition, organized under the auspices of the Royal Society of Victoria, left the Royal Park, Melbourne, taking with it twelve months' supply of stores, consisting of twenty-one tons of goods in all, which were to be but slightly trenched upon while within the bounds of civilization. The names of the members of the expedition were—Robert O'Hara Burke, leader; George James Landells, in charge of the camels, and second in command; William John Wills, astronomer and surveyor; Thomas Beckler, medical officer; Ludwig Becker, artist, naturalist, geological director, &c.; Charles Ferguson, foreman; and Thomas M'Donough, William Patton, Patrick Langan, Owen Cowen, William Brahe, Robert Fletcher, John King, Henry Crocker, and John Drakeford, associates.

Some changes in the party were subsequently found necessary, and several were dismissed.

On the 24th the Expedition camped at Sandhurst, and on the following day proceeded *en route* to Swan Hill, reaching it on the 6th September, where it was most hospitably entertained by the leading inhabitants of the township, prior to its taking leave of Victoria. From thence it proceeded to the Darling, which it reached towards the end of the month. There Mr. Burke established his first dépôt, at the Laidley Ponds, now named Menindie. An advanced party of eight, under Burke, now pushed on to Cooper's Creek; and as the season had been un-

usually wet and late, there was such an abundance of grass and water, that they reached that point with comparatively little difficulty on the 11th November. The party then travelled slowly down the creek, in order to recruit the strength of the animals, and in search of a suitable spot for the establishment of the permanent dépôt, which was fixed upon at camp 65. Having made all his arrangements, and written a despatch to the committee on the 13th December, Burke did not wait for the arrival of the remainder of the party under Mr. Wright, whom he had engaged at Menindie, and to whom he had given orders to bring on the bulk of the stores; but leaving the dépôt in charge of Brahe, Patton, M'Donough, and Dost Mahomed, he set forward, on the 16th December, for Eyre's Creek, taking with him Wills, King, and Gray, six camels, a horse, and about three months' supply of provisions. In his despatch he says, "I shall leave the party which remain here under the charge of Mr. Brahe, in whom I have every confidence. The feed is very good. There is no danger to be apprehended from the natives, if they are properly managed, and there is therefore nothing to prevent the party remaining here until our return, or until their provisions run short."

Brahe and his companions, thus left in charge, immediately set about forming a stockade to protect themselves from the annoyance of the natives, who appeared inclined to be troublesome, though subsequent events show that this was more apparent than real, and arose, probably, from the difficulty of holding intelligent intercourse with them. Four months passed away without any tidings either of those who had gone forward to the interior, or from those behind at the Darling; scurvy broke out amongst the small party, and Brahe was fearful of being reduced to

extremities. He said, in his statement to the committee, "after most seriously considering all the circumstances," he made up his mind to start for the Darling on Sunday, the 21st. April. He did so; having first deposited a small quantity of stores, consisting of 50lb. flour, 50lb. of oatmeal, 50lb. of sugar, and 30lb. of rice, at the foot of a large tree, on which he marked the word "Dig."

On the 28th Brahe fell in with Wright's party, which had broken down, reduced by sickness and death, in the vain attempt to reach Cooper's Creek, and was now about to make an immediate retreat to Tarrugutta. He at once placed himself and party under the command of Wright, who then remained at Bulla till the 1st of May, when he commenced his contemplated return to Tarrugutta. In his despatch of the 20th June, Wright says, "Upon reaching the next camp, Koorliatto, I resolved to give the sick a further spell, while I advanced with Mr. Brahe to the dépôt at Cooper's Creek, for the purpose of ascertaining whether Mr. Burke had returned, or the provisions left there by Mr. Brahe had been discovered by the natives. I found no signs of Mr. Burke's return or of the *cache* of stores having been disturbed; and returned to Koorliatto on the 12th of May, finding the men at the camp there all safe, but very little improved in health." Assisted by Brahe and his companions, Mr. Wright was enabled to convey the remainder of his party back to Menindie, though, owing to the "difficulty of moving men so extremely weak" as were

the sick, the journey was very tedious. He then sent on despatches with Brahe, who was met at the inn known as the "Durham Qx," on the Loddon, by Mr. Howitt, in command of the contingent party which had been sent forward from Melbourne, in consequence of the anxiety excited to know the fate of the Exploring Expedition. Howitt returned to Sandhurst, in company with Brahe, and, on their arrival, he sent on the following telegram:—

"Sandhurst, June 29.

"The Hon. John Macadam, M.D.

"I met Mr. Brahe at the Loddon with despatches, and received the following message:— 'Mr. Wright has reached Menindie with eight men, having been joined by Mr. Burke's dépôt party from Cooper's Creek. Messrs. Becker, Purcell, Stone, and Patton, died on the journey. Mr. Burke left Cooper's Creek on the 16th December. Nothing has been heard of him since that date. He was accompanied by Messrs. Wills, King, and Gray. The natives proved hostile, and the country for 150 miles was waterless. Two camels and three horses died, and one was lost.

(Signed) "W. Wright.

"I shall be in town with Mr. Brahe to-morrow morning.

(Signed) "A. W. Howitt,  
Leader of Contingent Party."

The intense excitement caused by this painful information, induced the Committee promptly to increase the strength of the contingent party, and Mr. Howitt again started on his mission, with instructions to proceed with all possible dispatch to Cooper's Creek, there to search for Burke's track, and, if possible, carry relief to his party. The results are now before the public.

# THE VICTORIAN EXPEDITION.

## THE CONTINENT CROSSED.

### DEATH OF BURKE AND TWO OF HIS PARTY.

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Late on Saturday, November 2, information reached Melbourne from Sandhurst of the arrival there of a messenger (Mr. Brahe) from Mr. Howitt's searching expedition, with a despatch from that leader, conveying the melancholy intelligence that Burke and Wills had perished at Cooper's Creek in the month of June last, of exhaustion, from fatigue and want of proper food; and that a third member of the party (Gray) had died on the return journey between the Gulf of Carpentaria and Cooper's Creek. The fourth (King) was found on the creek, living with the natives, by whom he had been treated kindly, and, we are happy to say, he is now restored to health. In his possession were the journals of the leader of the Expedition and Mr. Wills's maps and notes (which are now in possession of the Royal Society), which show that Burke and his companions successfully accomplished the crossing of the continent to the shores of the Gulf of Carpentaria, which they reached on the 11th February. The chart kept by Mr. Wills shows that the party followed Sturt's track to its farthest point, in lat. 24, when, finding the country to the north utterly impracticable, a course was struck direct east to the 140th parallel of longitude, which they followed north, almost in a straight line to the Albert River. They rested three days at a point on the river, in lat. 17deg. 53min, south, within the tidal influence, thus having accomplished the great feat of crossing the continent from sea to sea. They then turned back, almost by the same route, travelling for the most part of the way on foot, killing their horses and some of their camels for food, and suffering much from hunger. They

reached Cooper's Creek on the evening of the 21st April,—the very day on which Brahe and the depôt party under his charge left the creek to return to Menindie. A small quantity of provisions hidden by the depôt party was found by Burke and his companions, who, feeling themselves too weak to travel to Menindie (about 400 miles), made two successive attempts to reach the South Australian settlements, and were driven back on both occasions by want of water. In these attempts the month of May was spent.

The very small quantity of provisions that had been left by Brahe's party became soon exhausted, and they had to gather the seeds of a native plant which they found—the same plant which Lyons and Macpherson had to rely upon for some time. Without proper food, and worn out by the labour of gathering it, and doubtless prostrated in mind by the hopeless position that week after week found them in, their strength wasted away, and towards the end of June and about the same time that the tidings of the other deaths reached Melbourne, and about the time Mr. Howitt's party made its first start from this city, poor Burke died while in the act of making a last attempt to obtain succour from the blacks for himself and his companion; and Wills, alone in his hut, and about the same time as his friend Burke, breathed his last. From June till the 15th September, when he was found by Howitt, King, the last survivor of the party, lived amongst the natives of Cooper's Creek, by whom he was kindly treated. He was originally a soldier in the Indian army, and arrived here with Mr. Landells, as did



also Gray. The latter was a very strong young fellow, yet he was the first to perish. King, on the other hand, was not strong, and had left India for the benefit of his health. His narrative, which we give, will be found extremely interesting.

Melancholy interest attaches to the last despatch written by Mr. Burke, briefly but comprehensively announcing the success he had achieved, and to the last few lines traced despairingly by the hand of poor Wills.

The following is Mr. Howitt's despatch, announcing the results of his mission. It is dated from a camp on the return journey to Menindie, where no doubt he has now arrived :—

Poria Creek, Oct. 10, 1861.

Sir,—I have the honour to report my arrival here with the Contingent Exploring Party, on my return journey, having, on September 15, in latitude 27deg. 44min., and longitude 140deg. 40min., found John King, the only survivor of Mr. Burke's party, living with the Cooper's Creek natives. Mr. Burke and Mr. Wills had died some time previous to my arrival, from hunger and exhaustion, and Gray died before reaching Cooper's Creek, on their return journey from the Gulf. King was in a very weak, exhausted state when found, but, I am happy to say, has recovered wonderfully since, and Mr. Wheeler has just reported him to me as being out of his hands. The full particulars will be found in my diary, which, with King's narrative, is enclosed. I may state regarding my diary, that I have only transcribed that portion subsequent to our reaching this place on our outward journey, as up to that time we had followed the Expedition track, and nothing of interest had occurred. It may suffice for me to say, that from leaving Menindie we had travelled without meeting with any particular hindrances, finding splendid feed almost the whole way, and sufficient water for our use, with the exception of three nights, when our horses were without. The rain had been very partial, and in places we only found just sufficient for our immediate use. Torowoto and Carriapundy swamps and the mud plains were perfectly dry, and no water that could long be relied on, without subsequent rain, from Nuntherungee Creek to this place, a distance of about 180 miles. I had intended leaving the Expedition track at Carriapundy, but was deterred from doing so by the very dry appearance of the country; and, therefore, followed the track to this creek, which is permanent. I am happy to be able to state, that the party are and have been in perfect health, and that the horses are in excellent working order. The camels are, on the whole, in as good condition as when they left Menindie, and may be pronounced cured of the scab, which I cannot help attributing in a great measure to the bad management of the sepoyas. So far, I have met with no loss or accident of any kind, and the natives, wherever I

have seen them, have been friendly. I expect to be down at Menindie in three weeks, and may probably spend two or three days at Torowoto to endeavour to find permanent water, as I know of none there that can be relied on. I forward these despatches by Mr. Brahe and Weston Phillips, with four of our best horses. I consider that they will have no particular difficulties in going down, excepting as regards water, which would not be lessened by a larger party, and I cannot well spare more men, from the number of camels and pack-horses to look after. Should there be horses at Menindie fit for the journey down, I have instructed Mr. Brahe to proceed at once to town, taking with him the documents and field books belonging to Mr. Burke and Mr. Wills, and relating to the journey to and from the Gulf. King I shall send down on my arrival at the Darling.

I beg to urge on the committee the necessity of sending me immediate instructions to Menindie respecting the further disposal of the party and equipment.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

A. W. HOWITT,

Leader of the Contingent Exploring Party.

To the Hon. John Macadam, M.D., Hon.  
Secretary the Exploration Committee,  
Melbourne.

#### BURKE'S LAST DESPATCH.

The following is the last despatch written by Mr. Burke. It was found amongst the papers deposited on Cooper's Creek :—

Depôt No. 2, Cooper's Creek, Camp 65.—The return party from Carpentaria, consisting of myself, Wills, and King (Gray dead), arrived here last night, and found that the depôt party had only started on the same day. We proceed on to-morrow slowly down the creek towards Adelaide by Mount Hopeless, and shall endeavour to follow Gregory's track; but we are very weak. The two camels are done up, and we shall not be able to travel faster than four or five miles a day. Gray died on the road, from exhaustion and fatigue. We have all suffered much from hunger. The provisions left here will, I think, restore our strength. We have discovered a practicable route to Carpentaria, the chief portion of which lies on the 140th deg. of E. longitude. There is some good country between this and the Stony Desert. From there to the tropics the country is dry and stony. Between the tropics and Carpentaria a considerable portion is rangy, but it is well watered and richly grassed. We reached the shores of Carpentaria on February 11, 1861. Greatly disappointed at finding the party here gone.

(Signed) ROBERT O'HARA BURKE, Leader.

April 22, 1861.

P.S. The camels cannot travel, and we cannot walk, or we should follow the other party. We shall move very slowly down the creek.

May 30, 1861.

We have been unable to leave the creek. Both camels are dead, and our provisions are done. Mr. Burke and King are down on the

lower part of the creek. I am about to return to them, when we shall all probably come up this way. We are trying to live the best way we can, like the blacks, but find it hard work. Our clothes are going to pieces fast. Send provisions and clothes as soon as possible.

(Signed) WILLIAM J. WILLS.

The depôt party having left, contrary to instructions, has put us in this fix. I have deposited some of my journals here, for fear of accidents.

(Signed) W. J. W.

#### KING'S NARRATIVE.

Mr. Burke, Mr. Wills, and I, reached the depôt at Cooper's Creek, on April 21st, about half-past 7 in the evening, with two camels—all that remained of the six Mr. Burke took with him. All the provisions we then had consisted of a pound and a-half of dried meat. We found the party had gone the same day, and looking about for any mark they might have left, found the tree with DIG, April 21. Mr. Wills said the party had left for the Darling. We dug, and found the plant of stores. Mr. Burke took the papers out of the bottle, and then asked each of us whether we were able to proceed up the creek in pursuit of the party. We said not; and he then said that he thought it his duty to ask us, but that he himself was unable to do so, but that he had decided upon trying to make Mount Hopeless, as he had been assured by the committee in Melbourne that there was a cattle station within 150 miles of Cooper's Creek. Mr. Wills was not inclined to follow this plan, but wished to go down our old track, but at last gave in to Mr. Burke's wishes. I also wished to go down by our old track. We remained four or five days to recruit, making preparations to go down the creek by stages of four to five miles a-day, and Mr. Burke placed a paper in the plant, stating what were our plans. Travelling down the creek, we got some fish from the natives, and, some distance down, one of the camels (Landa) got bogged, and although we remained there that day and part of the next trying to dig him out, we found our strength insufficient to do so. The evening of the second day, we shot him as he lay, and, having cut off as much meat as we could, we lived on it while we stayed to dry the remainder. Throwing all the least necessary things away, we made one load for the remaining camel (Rajah), and each of us carried a swag of about 25lb. We were then tracing down the branches of the creek running S., but found that they ran out into earthy plains. We had understood that the creek along Gregory's track was continuous; and finding that all these creeks ran out into plains, Mr. Burke returned, our camel being completely knocked up. We then intended to give the camel a spell for a few days, and to make a new attempt to push on forty or fifty miles to the south, in the hope of striking the creek. During the time that the camel was being rested, Mr. Burke and Mr. Wills went in search of the natives, to endeavour to find out how the nardoo grew. Having found their camp, they obtained as much nardoo cake and fish as they could eat, but could not explain that they wished

to be shown how to find the seed themselves. They returned on the third day, bringing some fish and nardoo cake with them. On the following day, the camel Rajah seemed very ill, and I told Mr. Burke I thought he could not linger out more than four days; and as on the same evening the poor brute was on the point of dying, Mr. Burke ordered him to be shot. I did so, and we cut him up with two broken knives and a lancet. We cured the meat, and planted it; and Mr. Burke then made another attempt to find the nardoo, taking me with him. We went down the creek, expecting to find the natives at the camp where they had been last seen, but found that they had left; and not knowing whether they had gone up or down the creek, we slept in their gunyahs that night, and on the following morning returned to Mr. Wills. The next day Mr. Burke and I started up the creek, but could see nothing of them, and were three days away, when we returned and remained three days in our camp with Mr. Wills. We then made a plant of all the articles we could not carry with us, leaving 5lb. of rice and a quantity of meat, and then followed up the creek to where there were some good native huts. We remained at that place a few days, and finding that our provisions were beginning to run short, Mr. Burke said that we ought to do something, and that if we did not find the nardoo, we should starve, and that he intended to save a little dried meat and rice to carry us to Mount Hopeless. The three of us then came to the conclusion that it would be better to make a second attempt to reach Mount Hopeless, as we were then as strong as we were likely to be, our daily allowance being then reduced. Mr. Burke asked each of us whether we were willing to make another attempt to reach the South Australian settlements, and we decided on going. We took with us what remained of the provisions we had planted—two and a-half pounds of oatmeal, a small quantity of flour, and the dried meat—this, with powder and shot, and other small articles, made up our swags to 30lb. each, and Mr. Burke carried one billy of water, and I another. We had not gone far before we came on a flat, where I saw a plant growing which I took to be clover, and, on looking closer, saw the seed, and called out that I had found the nardoo. They were very glad when I found it. We travelled three days, and struck a watercourse coming south from Cooper's Creek. We traced this, as it branched out and reformed on the plains, until we at last lost it in flat country. Sandhills were in front of us, for which we made, and travelled all day, but found no water. We were all greatly fatigued, as our rations now consisted of only one small johnny cake and three sticks of dried meat daily. We camped that evening about four o'clock, intending to push next day until two o'clock p.m., and then, should we not find water, to return. We travelled and found no water, and the three of us sat down and rested for an hour, and then turned back. We all felt satisfied that, had there been a few days' rain, we could have got through. We were then, according to Mr. Wills's calculation, forty-five miles from the creek. We travelled on the day we turned back very late, and the following evening reached the nearest water at the creek. We gathered some nardoo, and boiled the seeds, as we were unable

to pound them. The following day we reached the main creek; and knowing where there was a fine water-hole and native gunyahs, we went there, intending to save what remained of our flour and dried meat, for the purpose of making another attempt to reach Mount Hopeless. On the following day, Mr. Wills and I went out to gather nardoo, of which we obtained a supply sufficient for three days; and finding a pounding-stone at the gunyahs, Mr. Burke and I pounded the seed, which was such slow work that we were compelled to use half flour and half nardoo. Mr. Burke and Mr. Wills then went down the creek for the remainder of the dried meat which we had planted, and we had now all our things with us, gathering nardoo, and living the best way we could. Mr. Burke requested Mr. Wills to go up the creek as far as the depot, and to place a note in the plant there, stating that we were then living on the creek, the former note having stated that we were on our road to South Australia. He also was to bury there the field-books of the journey to the Gulf. Before starting he got 3lb. of flour and 4lb. of pounded nardoo, and about a pound of meat, as he expected to be absent about eight days. During his absence, I gathered nardoo and pounded it, as Mr. Burke wished to lay in a supply in case of rain.

A few days after Mr. Wills left, some natives came down the creek to fish at some water-holes near our camp. They were very civil to us at first, and offered us some fish; on the second day they came again to fish, and Mr. Burke took down two bags, which they filled for him; on the third day they gave us one bag of fish, and afterwards all came to our camp. We used to keep our ammunition and other articles in one gunyah, and all three of us live together in another. One of the natives took an oilcloth out of this gunyah, and Mr. Burke seeing him run away with it, followed him with his revolver, and fired over his head, and upon this the native dropped the oilcloth. While he was away the other blacks invited me away to a waterhole to eat fish; but I declined to do so, as Mr. Burke was away, and a number of natives were about who would have taken all our things. When I refused, one took his boomerang and laid it over my shoulder, and then told me by signs that if I called out for Mr. Burke, as I was doing, that he would strike me. Upon this I got them all in front of the gunyah and fired a revolver over their heads, but they did not seem at all afraid, until I got out the gun, when they all ran away. Mr. Burke, hearing the report, came back, and we saw no more of them until late that night, when they came with some cooked fish, and called out "white fellow." Mr. Burke then went out with his revolver, and found a whole tribe coming down, all painted, and with fish in small nets carried by two men. Mr. Burke went to meet them, and they wished to surround him, but he knocked as many of the nets of fish out of their hands as he could, and shouted out to me to fire. I did so, and they ran off. We collected five small nets of cooked fish. The reason he would not accept the fish from them was, that he was afraid of being too friendly lest they should be always at our camp. We then lived on fish until Mr. Wills returned. He told us that he had met the natives soon after leaving us, and that they were very kind to him, and had given him

plenty to eat both on going up and returning. He seemed to consider that he should have very little difficulty in living with them, and as their camp was close to ours, he returned to them the same day, and found them very hospitable and friendly, keeping him with them two days. They then made signs to him to be off. He came to us and narrated what had happened, but went back to them the following day, when they gave him his breakfast, but made signs for him to go away. He pretended not to understand them, and would not go, upon which they made signs that they were going up the creek, and that he had better go down. They packed up, and left the camp, giving Mr. Wills a little nardoo to take to us.

During his absence, while Mr. Burke was cooking some fish, during a strong wind, the flames caught the gunyah, and burned so rapidly that we were unable, not only to put it out, but to save any of our things, excepting one revolver and a gun. Mr. Wills being returned, it was decided to go up the creek and live with the natives, if possible, as Mr. Wills thought we should have but little difficulty in obtaining provisions from them if we camped on the opposite side of the creek to them. He said he knew where they were gone, so we packed up and started. Coming to the gunyahs, where we expected to have found them, we were disappointed, and seeing a nardoo field close by, halted, intending to make it our camp. For some time we were employed gathering nardoo, and laying up a supply. Mr. Wills and I used to collect and carry home a bag each day, and Mr. Burke generally pounded sufficient for our dinner during our absence, but Mr. Wills found himself getting very weak, and was shortly unable to go out to gather nardoo as before, nor even strong enough to pound it, so that in a few days he became almost helpless. I still continued gathering; and Mr. Burke now also began to feel very weak, and said he could be of very little use in pounding. I had now to gather and pound for all three of us. I continued to do this for a few days, but finding my strength rapidly failing, my legs being very weak and painful, I was unable to go out for several days, and we were compelled to consume six days' stock which we had laid by. Mr. Burke now proposed that I should gather as much as possible in three days, and that with this supply we should go in search of the natives—a plan which had been urged upon us by Mr. Wills as the only chance of saving him and ourselves as well, as he clearly saw that I was no longer able to collect sufficient for our wants. Having collected the seed, as proposed, and having pounded sufficient to last Mr. Wills for eight days, and two days for ourselves, we placed water and firewood within his reach, and started. Before leaving him, however, Mr. Burke asked him whether he still wished it, as under no other circumstances would he leave him; and Mr. Wills again said that he looked on it as our only chance. He then gave Mr. Burke a letter and his watch for his father, and we buried the remainder of the field books near the gunyah. Mr. Wills said that, in case of my surviving Mr. Burke, he hoped that I would carry out his last wishes, in giving the watch and letter to his father.

In travelling the first day, Mr. Burke seemed

very weak, and complained of great pain in his legs and back. On the second day he seemed to be better, and said that he thought he was getting stronger, but, on starting, did not go two miles before he said he could go no further. I persisted in his trying to go on, and managed to get him along several times, until I saw that he was almost knocked up, when he said he could not carry his swag, and threw all he had away. I also reduced mine, taking nothing but a gun and some powder and shot, and a small pouch and some matches. On starting again, we did not go far before Mr. Burke said we should halt for the night, but, as the place was close to a large sheet of water, and exposed to the wind, I prevailed on him to go a little further, to the next reach of water, where we camped. We searched about, and found a few small patches of nardoo, which I collected and pounded, and, with a crow which I shot, made a good evening's meal. From the time we halted Mr. Burke seemed to be getting worse, although he ate his supper. He said he felt convinced he could not last many hours, and gave me his watch, which he said belonged to the committee, and a pocketbook, to give to Sir William Stawell, and in which he wrote some notes. He then said to me, "I hope you will remain with me here till I am quite dead—it is a comfort to know that some one is by; but when I am dying, it is my wish that you should place the pistol in my right hand, and that you leave me unburied as I lie." That night he spoke very little, and the following morning I found him speechless, or nearly so; and about eight o'clock he expired. I remained a few hours there, but as I saw there was no use in remaining longer, I went up the creek in search of the natives. I felt very lonely, and at night usually slept in deserted wurleys, belonging to the natives. Two days after leaving the spot where Mr. Burke died, I found some gunyahs, where the natives had deposited a bag of nardoo, sufficient to last me a fortnight, and three bundles containing various articles. I also shot a crow that evening, but was in great dread that the natives would come and deprive me of the nardoo.

I remained there two days, to recover my strength, and then returned to Mr. Wills. I took back three crows; but found him lying dead in his gunyah, and the natives had been there and had taken away some of his clothes. I buried the corpse with sand, and remained there some days; but finding that my stock of nardoo was running short, and being unable to gather it, I tracked the natives who had been to the camp by their footprints in the sand, and went some distance down the creek, shooting crows and hawks on the road. The natives, hearing the report of the gun, came to meet me, and took me with them to their camp, giving me nardoo and fish. They took the birds I had shot and cooked them for me, and afterwards showed me a gunyah, where I was to sleep with three of the single men. The following morning they commenced talking to me, and putting one finger on the ground, and covering it with sand, at the same time pointing up the creek, saying, "Whitefellow," which I understood to mean that one white man was dead. From this I knew that they were the tribe who had taken Mr. Wills' clothes. They then asked me where the third

white man was, and I also made the sign of putting two fingers on the ground and covering them with sand, at the same time pointing up the creek. They appeared to feel great compassion for me when they understood that I was alone on the creek, and gave me plenty to eat. After being four days with them, I saw that they were becoming tired of me, and they made signs that they were going up the creek, and that I had better go downwards; but I pretended not to understand them. The same day they shifted camp, and I followed them; and, on reaching their camp, I shot some crows, which pleased them so much that they made me a breakwind in the centre of their camp, and came and sat round me until such time as the crows were cooked, when they assisted me to eat them. The same day, one of the women, to whom I had given part of a crow, came and gave me a ball of nardoo, saying that she would give me more only she had such a sore arm that she was unable to pound. She showed me a sore on her arm, and the thought struck me that I would boil some water in the billy and wash her arm with a sponge. During the operation the whole tribe sat round, and were muttering one to another. Her husband sat down by her side, and she was crying all the time. After I had washed it, I touched it with some nitrate of silver, when she began to yell and ran off, crying out, "Mokow! mokow!" (Fire! fire!) From this time, she and her husband used to give me a small quantity of nardoo both night and morning, and whenever the tribe were about going on a fishing excursion, he used to give me notice to go with them. They also used to assist me in making a gourley, or breakwind, whenever they shifted camp. I generally shot a crow, or a hawk, and gave it to them in return for these little services. Every four or five days the tribe would surround me, and ask whether I intended going up or down the creek; at last I made them understand that if they went up I should go up the creek, and if they went down I should also go down, and from this time they seemed to look upon me as one of themselves, and supplied me with fish and nardoo regularly. They were very anxious, however, to know where Mr. Burke lay; and one day when we were fishing in the waterholes close by I took them to the spot. On seeing his remains the whole party wept bitterly, and covered them with bushes. After this they were much kinder to me than before; and I always told them that the white men would be here before two moons; and in the evenings, when they came with nardoo and fish, they used to talk about the "whitefellows" coming, at the same time pointing to the moon. I also told them they would receive many presents, and they constantly asked me for tomahawks, called by them "Bomayko." From this time to when the relief party arrived—a period of about a month—they treated me with uniform kindness, and looked upon me as one of themselves. The day on which I was released, one of the tribe who had been fishing came and told me that the whitefellows were coming, and the whole of the tribe who were then in camp sallied out in every direction to meet the party, while the man who had brought the news took me across the creek, where I shortly saw the party coming down.

## BRAHE'S MEMORANDUM.

The following is the memorandum deposited by Brahe with the provisions, when he left the dépôt, at Cooper's Creek, on the 21st of April. It was found by Mr. Burke's party on the evening of the same day:—

Dépôt, Cooper's Creek, April 21, 1861.

The dépôt party of V.E.E. leaves this camp to-day, to return to the Darling. I intend to go S.E. from camp 60, to get on to our old track near Bulloo. Two of my companions and myself are quite well; the third—Patton—has been unable to walk for the last eighteen days, as his leg has been severely hurt when thrown by one of the horses. No person has been up here from the Darling.

We have six camels and twelve horses, in good working condition.

WILLIAM BRAHE.

## HOWITT'S JOURNAL.

Camp 20, Poria Creek, Sept. 1. Lat. 28deg. 44min., long. 142deg. 42min.—The country, after leaving camp 19 (Koorlejur), was generally sandy ridges, running variously from N.E. round to N.W. Between these sandy tracts, we passed a good deal of clayey flat ground—in places hard and smooth, in others spongy and rotten, and cracked deeply by the heat, polygonum and cane-grass growing in great quantities. The feed everywhere poor and scanty and very dry. I believe that very little rain has fallen here this season. After about ten miles, the sand ridges became more marked, and of a red colour, and the flats wide, and draining to the N.E. Scattered box-trees began to appear, and birds were more numerous. At five miles more, struck Poria Creek, a deep channel coming from a northerly direction, and containing abundance of water; its general width appears to be about sixty feet, and the banks are lined with small box-trees; water plants and a species of water moss grow in the bed, and, from fish and cray-fish being found in it, I have no doubt that it is permanent—in fact, the only water I can consider such of all these we have seen on this side the Daubeny Ranges. At a distance of about half-a mile, the course of the creek is followed by high red sand ridges, running parallel to its course. There is no timber anywhere but on the creek, and only small bushes, and one or two kinds of pittisporum and mulgar on the sand ridges. The country is very inferior, in every respect but water, as we proceed. Signal fires in two places as we were travelling; both very large, and no doubt intended to announce our arrival. On some of the oaks I observed quantities of the plant growing, from the seeds of which the natives make their bread. It appears to choose a loose blistered clayey soil, subject to be flooded, such as is generally found in polygonum ground. The leaves resemble clover, but with a silvery down, which is also found on the seed when fresh; these grow on short stems springing from the root, and are flat and rather oval; in places where the plant has died down, these seeds quite cover the ground; they are gathered by the native women, and, after being cleaned from the sand, are pounded between two stones and baked as cakes.

Camp 20, Sept. 2.—Spelled here to-day, before

starting across for Cooper's Creek. Mending pack-bags, dressing camels, baking four days' bread, &c. Day warm; wind from S.E., which seems to be the prevalent quarter. Flies begin to be troublesome.

Camp 21, Sept. 3. Lat. 28deg. 33min., long. 142deg. 31min.—Started at eight o'clock, and left the expedition track at Poria Creek. Struck a course for Cooper's Creek N.W. by compass. For seven miles travelled over sand ridges running N.E. and S.W., with wide clayey valley between, in which were occasional small pools of muddy water. The feed everywhere very dry, but tolerably plentiful on the sand hills. Bushes and small mulgar trees were growing in places. We here crossed a dry box swamp, where crows, wood swallows, kites, and small birds were numerous; and I observed here several trees with a rough bark resembling cork, and with bunches of long, pointed, dark green leaves growing at the ends of the small branches. The sand hills here became low and flat, and the valley wider. Shortly afterwards crossed the track of a large camel going N.E., apparently about eight months ago. The country undulating and well grassed, and, as far as I could make out, the watershed both to the N.E. and S.W. At twelve o'clock, after crossing a dry swamp full of watercourses, and passing a low sand hill, came on a creek running S.W., thickly timbered with large box trees, the bed wide and the banks steep, and in several places large pools of clear water. Marsh-mallows and other vegetation, now perfectly dried up, were on the banks. Native camps were numerous; but none that I saw were very recent. Mussel-shells and the claws of crayfish were lying near them. I have every reason to believe that some of these pools are permanent. Crossing this we passed several branch creeks running through a clayey plain, and all lined with trees; large pools of water in several. I named this creek after the Hon. David Wilkie, M.D., M.L.C. On leaving the clay flats at the creek we again crossed sand hills and undulating country for several miles, mostly well grassed, but much burned up. Saltbush and cottonbush plentiful in the hollows, and scattered timber beginning to appear. At half-past two came on a watercourse running N., and containing large but shallow pools of water. The feed round about excellent, and enough timber to be called a thin gum forest. The gums here a new species not before seen by us, several feet of the butt having a rough semipersistent bark, above which it is smooth and greenish, with a red tint; leaves thick and glossy, very much resembling one growing near Omeo. Ducks here very tame. Camped, having made eighteen miles, and country not looking so well ahead. The general fall seems to be to the westward. Samia, the largest of our camels, lay down just before reaching the camp; he is the only one of the lot that has not improved in condition, and he keeps himself poor by constantly watching the other camels, and driving them away from the females. He only carries 2cwt.

Camp 22, Stokes' Ranges, Sept. 4. Lat. 28deg. 20min., long. 142deg. 19min.—Left camp at half-past seven. Travelled for three miles through open gum forest, growing on clayey land. Water channels frequent, with occasional small pools of water. Saltbush and grass, but very dry.

Then crossed an open plain with claypans, the drainage of which, running westward, forms numerous small box creeks, which form and spread out again on the plain. No water here, only liquid mud. At about five miles passed a small box creek with pools of water, and came on an open sandy plain destitute of vegetation, excepting the remains of salicaceous plants grown last season. At ten o'clock crossed a large dry gum creek, full of gravel and boulders, coming in an easterly direction from the range. As it lay in our course we followed it up for some distance, but found no water, although crows, rose cockatoos, and crested pigeons were on it. The country here became stony, but with more dry grass, and gradually rose to the range; from this point the travelling was very severe upon the horses, and consequently very slow, as the ground is everywhere covered with fragments of sharp flinty stones. The ranges are of no great height, and slope gently upwards, but are cut by numerous deep gorges, filled with blocks of stone and scrub, and mostly containing a dry gum creek. These lying across our track made it difficult to get on. The mulgar scrub was very thick in places, a great deal of it dead, and numbers of shrubs new to me. Camped at half-past three at the edge of a deep scrubby gorge, with plenty of dry grass, but no water. Went down the gorge after camping, to look for water, but found none, nor could I see any chance from the loose gravelly bed and large boulders. Scrub very thick; among other, the native orange, of large size, and covered with unripe fruit. Distance, twenty miles.

Camp 23, north side of Stokes' Ranges, Sept. 5. Lat. 28deg. 10min., long. 42deg. 8min.—Had some difficulty in crossing the gully this morning, the sides being steep and covered with large blocks of stone; thick mulgar, scrub up both sides. From here, travelled over similar stony ridges to those described yesterday for several hours, crossing two wide deep gorges, each with a dry creek and large gums, and flanked by precipitous stony ranges. On reaching the summit of the range, found it to be a stony table land, almost devoid of vegetation. Some remarkable flat-topped peaks to the N. about twelve miles. At noon, suddenly came to the edge of a bluff overlooking the Cooper's Creek country; apparently a boundless extent of plains, with dark lines of scrub or timber on the horizon. To descend from this bluff to a wide basin of open country below, probably seven to eight hundred feet, occupied an hour, and I could only consider it a happy chance that some of the pack-horses or camels met with no accident among the large blocks of loose stone. I could not have believed that camels could have carried their loads up or down such places as we have crossed to-day. On reaching the basin, found it stony to a degree difficult to describe. The ground was literally paved with angular and rounded fragments of sandstone and flint, coated with a shining oxide of iron. Vegetation very scanty, and water nowhere visible although I saw birds which I have seldom seen far from springs. Travelling for several miles over this country, surrounded by a chain of abrupt square hills, we slowly picked our road as best we could. Several of the horses were very footsore, and most of them fagged with the

severe day's work and want of water. The day, too, was unusually warm. At 3.30, found it necessary to camp, the camels and horses being very tired. No water, scarcely any feed. After camp went to a square steep hill, with Mr. Brahe, to reconnoitre the country. From it had an extensive view towards Cooper's Creek, and was pleased to see that the stony country does not probably extend more than four miles from us. Beyond that open plains, and on the horizon what seem to be sand hills and timber. A large body of smoke to the west. I found the summit of the hill to be covered with large masses of a white crystalline stone, grouped in irregular columns, and ringing with a metallic sound when struck. It is the same stone as that universally strewn over the country, and of which and a coarse sandstone and conglomerate the ranges are mostly formed. Managed to give the horses two quarts of water each, in the hope that they would feed. They were so thirsty that two tried to take the quart pots off the fire.

Camp 24, Sept. 6. Lat. 28deg.; long. 142deg. 2min.—Left camp shortly after six. The horses had not fed during the night, partly from thirst, partly being afraid of the stones. Followed down a gully leading into very stony plains, which we crossed for several hours, being obliged to lead the horses very slowly. No timber and scarcely any vegetation: the most desolate stony wilderness imaginable. About ten o'clock came near the sandhills, and the country improved as regarded travelling, but not for feed or water. On a dry watercourse came on a party of natives, of whom some ran away; the others, consisting of an old grey-haired man, an old hag of a woman, a younger man, and two or three lubras and children, waited until I rode up. They were in a very excited state, waving branches, and jabbering incessantly. The younger man shook all over with fright. Sandy could not understand them, and I could only catch "Gow" (Go on). At last, by the offer of a knife, I prevailed on the old man to come with us to show us the nearest water, but after half a mile his courage gave way, and he climbed up a box-tree to be out of reach. Mr. Brahe rode up to him, when he climbed into the top branches, jabbering without stopping for a moment. Finding that he would not come down, and kept pointing to the N.W. (our course), we left him. All the natives were naked, and the old man was the only one who had any covering for his head—a net. We here entered undulating sandy country, slightly scrubby and well grassed, and at the same time came on Brahe's down track. Our horses at once struck into a better pace, going at least three miles and a half an hour. The camels also pushed on well. The loose horses kept wide of the track, looking out for water in the polygonum ground, and at ten minutes past twelve, one old stager found an ample supply in a channel on the right hand. The horses at once made a rush, and it was almost impossible to prevent their drinking as much as they wished. Three had for the last hour shown unmistakable signs of giving in, and all were very much pinched with thirst. Camped by the water in first-rate feed. Rain came on steadily from N.E. shortly after, and has continued. The horses have just been a third time to water.

Camp 24, Sept. 7.—It rained very heavily

during the night, with strong gusts of wind from N.E., and this morning the flats and the claypans are swimming with water, and the ground very soft. Resting to-day, as the horses require it. Drying things, shoeing horses, and digging tank to try and hold water later in the season.

Camp 25, Cooper's Creek, Sept. 8. Lat. 27deg. 51min.; long. 141deg. 45min.—(Half a mile above camp sixty of Victorian Expedition.)—Travelled N. 60 deg. W., through a succession of sand hills, with flats of rotten polygonum ground between. The vegetation very green and in full flower, and box-trees growing on most of the flats. Towards noon, after crossing some high red sand hills, came into the earthy plains through which the various channels of Cooper's Creek run to the westward. The ground very rotten, and cracked by numerous deep fissures; dry channels in every direction. About six miles brought us to a patch of sand hills, where the bare loose summits were crested with a pink flowering mesembryanthemum; the pink flowers, with the orange-coloured sand and the bright green vegetation, produced a very singular effect. We here suddenly came upon a native camp of four wurlays. Only one black fellow was at home, and the three leading men of our procession came suddenly upon him as he was lying on the ground playing with his dog. He gave a succession of yells, and then ran off as if electrified. Here we crossed the first branch of Cooper's Creek, a wide shallow bed, full of green weeds and grass, and lined with box. From this we crossed about three miles of loose earthy plains, devoid of vegetation, and camped on the N. side of a large branch, near a shallow sheet of water. No feed on the plains, but grass and green weeds in the channel. Large box trees on the bank. Distance travelled, twenty-four miles.

Camp 26, Sept. 9. Lat. 27deg. 49min.; long. 141deg. 38min.—While loading up this morning, five blackfellows made their appearance on the opposite side of the creek, and, as usual, commenced shouting and waving their arms. We cooed in return, and one waded across, but waited on the bank until I broke a branch, and beckoned him to come up. The others then followed him. They were all fine well-built young men, with open intelligent faces, and very different from the natives usually met with. They wore nets wrapped round their waists; and one, apparently the head man, had his front teeth knocked out. Sandy said he could only understand "narrangy word" they said; but I believe that he could not understand them at all, as he was quite unable to make them comprehend that I wished to know if they had seen any stray camels about the creek. Before we had finished loading, they returned to the opposite bank, and sat down watching us. On our starting they waded across to our camp—probably to pick up anything left behind, which would be very little. To-day we travelled over earthy plains for thirteen miles; they were cracked in every direction, and covered with a network of channels. In times of flood, the whole of them must be under water, and I can scarcely imagine anything more luxuriant than the appearance of these plains after a wet season. At present everything is dry and withered, but everywhere the stalks of marsh mallows and other flowering plants are as high as a horse's back, and very close together. Tufts of

grass line each side and cover the bed of the water-courses. Here and there clumps and lines of timber mark the course of the larger creeks, and sandhills rise like islands from the plains. To the S. of W., at about nine miles, we had a range—probably stony—and following its base a strongly marked line of timber, which I believe to be the main creek. No flood appears to have come down for two seasons, and waterholes which were tolerably well filled five months ago are now dry, or nearly so. At thirteen miles crossed a branch, where Mr. Burke's marked tree, LXL, stands, and camped at a claypan under a sandhill, about a mile to the W. Strong breeze from the N.E. and N. all day, and steady rain at night. Near here, I observed for the first time a new tree, with a rough scaly bark and thick foliage, the leaves small and oval, and set in pairs on a stem. The tree grows to fifteen or twenty feet, and bears numbers of flat brown pods, each containing from four to six hard light brown beans, known by us as the bean tree.

Camp 27, Sept. 10. Lat. 27deg. 39min.; long. 141deg. 30min.—The rain ceased shortly before sunrise, and the travelling was in consequence very heavy, the earthy plains being not only soft, as before, but sticky. Shortly after leaving camp saw several natives on a sand hill making signs. I went up to them with Mr. Welsh, and after a great deal of trouble, persuaded one to come to me. He was a fine-looking fellow, painted white, skeleton fashion, and carried a very long boomerang stuck in his girdle behind. I could make nothing of him, excepting that he gave me a small ball of what seemed to be chewed grass, as a token of friendship, and in return I gave him a piece of cold doughboy I had with me for lunch, which he seemed to relish very much. We travelled till noon over a succession of earthy plains, broken by numerous box channels, one of which contained a large resch of water; but the feed everywhere was miserably dry and scarce. The country looks wretched. After passing this channel, seven natives made their appearance, one of whom Mr. Brahe recognized as one of the party who tried to surprise the depot last season. They presented him with a small quantity of some dried plant from a bundle which one of them carried; it had a strong pungent taste and smell, and I am at a loss to conjecture its use, unless as a kind of tobacco. Our black boy was frightened, and told me he thought they meant to "look out, kill him"—as I understood—by witchcraft, or enchantment, or poison. They followed us at a distance to our camp, where they sat down a little way off, making signs that they were hungry, and wanted tomahawks. After an hour's waiting, they decamped. Killed two deaf adders and a snake of a sulphur colour on the track. Halted near a small pool of water, where there was a little green feed, which has become a rarity. The country looks miserable ahead. Travelling very heavy on the horses, as the mud balls in great lumps. Stony ridges to the S. of the creek, at about four miles, and a good deal of timber visible on all sides. Weather still threatening rain; flies very troublesome.

Camp, 28, Sept. 11. Lat., 27deg. 35min.; long., 141deg. 19min.—Our horses strayed for feed during the night, and made it late before we started. Travelled through a box forest full

of channels, when we came to a dry creek coming from the N.E., with a rocky bed. From here, for some distance, stony ground to the right hand, and deep channels running parallel to each other in a westerly direction. I observed flood marks considerably higher than our heads on horseback, and the water must be much confined by the stony rises on each side of the creek, although they are probably two miles apart. Mint was growing on the edges of the channels, and tea tree of large size. We then came on a long reach of water, about sixty yards wide; the country miserable, not a vestige of feed to be seen anywhere, except the withered and blackened remain of plants on the plains, and occasional patches of green couch grass in the creek bed. After this we traversed a box forest, and came on a deep channel from the N.E., where Mr. Burke's first depôt was situated. The feed was slightly better, owing to the sandy nature of the ground. About noon, passed large reaches of brackish water, and numerous pools of brine, in the channels of the creek, but saw no feed anywhere. At length found one place where patches of couch grass, with green plants and tufts of coarse grass, were growing among the stones, and halted, as the clay plains before us were perfectly bare. It is long since I have seen such a barren, miserable place as this part of Cooper's Creek. Native camps were numerous, but all deserted. During the day, flights of cockatoo parrots passed us, migrating to the eastward. Where we are camped the creek is wide, with a stony bed; the south bank is formed of limestone, and large quantities of opalized wood are lying about. A short distance above, the rocky banks come close down to the creek.

Camp 29, Sept. 12. Lat. 27deg. 35min.; long. 141deg. 6min.—Travelled over clayey plains, with scattered timber and a good deal of withered herbage. A rugged range, apparently sandstone, with flat-topped hills and peaks to the N., running N.E. and S.W., at about nine miles distance. At four miles passed a wide deep reach of water, several miles in length, between steep banks, and probably brackish, from its colour. Numbers of pelicans, spoonbills, cormorants, and other water-fowl on it. On each side bare cracked plains, extending to the stony rises. At three miles more, the stony country on our right hand closed in numerous deep channels, forming the creek, some of which were rocky, some sandy. Here, as elsewhere, was green grass and plants growing on the sand. Rather thickly timbered. At noon, came to where the creek forces a passage between rocky ridges; the channels are deep and tortuous, and in places encumbered with large blocks of stone. I here saw red gums for the first time on the creek. This continued for four miles, with narrow ridges of hard clay, covered with dense polygonum, separating the watercourses, when we came on more open country, with detached sandhills, and better feed, though very dry. Large reaches of water; rocky banks of sandstone in places; bars of rock cross the creek. Camped near some sandhills, at a large waterhole. After camping, tried fishing, and good success, only that I lost two hooks, which I can ill spare. Caught five silver perch, weighing from 1½lb. to 3½lb., and several others were caught by the party by firelight. The fish excellent,

and of a fine flavour. Distance, seventeen miles.

Camp 30, Sept. 13. Lat. 27deg. 38min.; long. 141deg.—Made a short stage to-day, for the sake of feed for the horses, which is a thing to be considered, from the dry appearance of the country. Reached the depôt, Fort Wills, in three miles, through country rather better than we have seen for some days. More rain has fallen here lately than elsewhere, and the grass is just springing, but too short to be of much use. I believe this to be the first rain for many months. The water all down the creek as far as we have come, has fallen at the rate of about three feet in the last four months. Found the depôt as Mr. Brahe left it, the plant untouched, and nothing removed of the useless things lying about, but a piece of leather. But from the very evident fact that things are buried, I cannot understand why the natives have not found them. From here followed down the creek for several miles, and camped at some sandhills near a pool of water. Saw here the track of a large camel going up the creek. The small crested pigeon, spoken of by Sturt, numerous. Cool wind from S. E.

Camp 31, Sep. 14. Lat., 27deg. 42min.; long 140deg. 4min.—We had a late start this morning, as three of the horses were away, and one ill—indeed, I doubted at first whether he would be able to travel. Followed the course of the creek down for about nine miles, crossing several branches which go out south, and form a reach of water before re-entering the main creek. Here the rocky ridges on both sides close in, and the water has forced a narrow deep channel through a perfect wall of rock, forming below the finest reach of water we have yet seen—about 500 yards wide, and several miles long, and very deep. The rugged hills on the north side, and the fine gums on its banks, produce a fine effect. The rock through which the channel has been worn is of a hard flinty nature, inclined to be columnar, but forming huge masses of boulders. Deep round hollows have been worn in these by the floods, and at the water's edge in one place where I tried the depth, the rock is perpendicular below the surface. Waterfowl, fish, and turtle are plentiful. The immediate neighbourhood, and as far as one can see on each side is destitute of vegetation and very stony. We had some trouble in getting the horses and camels over the masses of rough stone which block up both sides of the creek. Leaving this, we struck across a large bend, over sandy country, with large red sand hummocks, and better grassed than any we had yet seen on the creek. More rain must have fallen here, as pools of water were visible, in many places. About three o'clock struck the creek again, with a wide sandy bed, heavily timbered with box and gum, and scrubby. The creek, I think, had been running slightly, from the water-marks, and a good deal of green grass was growing on the banks. Camped on a large waterhole, about a quarter of a mile below Mr. Burke's first camp after leaving the depôt. We could see where the camels had been tied up, but found no marked tree. To-day I noticed in two or three places old camel droppings and tracks, where Mr. Brahe informed me he was certain their camels had never been, as they were watched every day near the depôt, and tied up at night. Mr. Burke's camels



were led on the way down. It looked very much as if stray camels had been about during the last four months. The tracks seemed to me to be going up the creek, but the ground was too stony to be able to make sure.

Camp 32, Sept. 15. Lat. 27deg. 44min., long. 140deg. 40min.—On leaving this morning I went ahead with Sandy, to try and pick up Mr. Burke's track. At the lower end of a large waterhole, found where one or two horses had been feeding for some months; the tracks ran in all directions to and from the water, and were as recent as a week. At the same place I found the handle of a clasp-knife. From here struck out south for a short distance from the creek, and found a distinct camel's track and droppings on a native path; the footprint was about four months old, and going E. I then sent the black boy to follow the creek, and struck across some sandy country in a bend on the north side. No tracks here; and coming on a native path leading my way, I followed it, as the most likely place to see any signs. In about four miles this led me to the lower end of a very large reach of water, and on the opposite side were numbers of native wurleys. I crossed at a neck of sand, and at a little distance again came on the track of a camel going up the creek; at the same time I found a native, who began to gesticulate in a very excited manner, and to point down the creek, bawling out, "Gow, gow!" as loud as he could; when I went towards him he ran away, and, finding it impossible to get him to come to me, I turned back to follow the camel track and to look after my party, as I had not seen anything of them for some miles. The track was visible in sandy places, and was evidently the same I had seen for the last two days. I also found horse tracks in places, but very old. Crossing the creek, I cut our track, and rode after the party. In doing so I came upon three pounds of tobacco, which had lain where I saw it for some time. This, together with the knife-handle, the fresh horse tracks, and the camel track going eastward, puzzled me extremely, and led me into a hundred conjectures. At the lower end of the large reach of water before mentioned I met Sandy and Frank looking for me, with the intelligence that King, the only survivor of Mr. Burke's party, had been found. A little further on I found the party halted, and immediately went across to the blacks' wurleys, where I found King sitting in a hut which the natives had made for him. He presented a melancholy appearance—wasted to a shadow, and hardly to be distinguished as a civilised being but by the remnants of clothes upon him. He seemed exceedingly weak, and found it occasionally difficult to follow what he said. The natives were all gathered round, seated on the ground, looking with a most gratified and delighted expression. Camped where the party had halted on a high bank, close to the water. I shall probably be here ten days, to recruit King before returning.

Camp 32, Sept. 16.—King already looking vastly improved, even since yesterday, and not like the same man. Have commenced shoeing horses and preparing for our return. Wind from S.W., with signs of rain. The natives seem to be getting ready for it.

Camp 32, Sept. 18. Left camp this morning with Messrs. Brahe, Welsh, Wheeler, and King, to perform a melancholy duty which has weighed

on my mind ever since we have camped here, and which I have only put off until King should be well enough to accompany us. We proceeded down the creek for seven miles, crossing a branch running to the southward, and followed a native track leading to that part of the creek where Mr. Burke, Mr. Wills, and King camped after their unsuccessful attempt to reach Mount Hopeless and the northern settlements of South Australia, and where poor Wills died. We found the two gunyahs pretty much as King had described them, situated on a sandbank between two waterholes, and about a mile from the flat where they procured the nardoo seed, on which they managed to exist so long. Poor Wills's remains we found lying in the wurley in which he died, and where King, after his return from seeking for the natives, had buried him with sand and rushes. We carefully collected the remains and interred them where they lay; and, not having a prayer-book, I read chap. v. of 1 Cor., that we might at least feel a melancholy satisfaction in having shown the last respect to his remains. We heaped sand over the grave, and laid branches upon it, that the natives might understand by their own tokens not to disturb the last repose of a fellow being. I cut the following inscription on a tree close by, to mark the spot:—

W. J. WILLS,
XLV. YDS.
W.N.W.
A.H.

The field books, a note-book belonging to Mr. Burke, various small articles lying about, of no value in themselves, but now invested with a deep interest from the circumstances connected with them, and some of the nardoo seed on which they had subsisted, with the small wooden trough in which it had been cleaned, I have now in my possession. We returned home with saddened feelings; but I must confess that I felt a sense of relief that this painful ordeal had been gone through. King was very tired when we returned; and I must, most unwillingly, defer my visit to the spot where Mr. Burke's remains are lying until he is better able to bear the fatigue.

Sept. 19.—Shoeing horses. A very slow and troublesome job, as many have never been shod before, and our forge is of the most primitive description. This afternoon got the pigeons in order of flying. Their tails being rubbed down by travelling so far in a cage, I got the tails from several crested pigeons, and inserted feathers in the stumps of our carriers, fastening the splices with waxed thread; the plan answered far better than I had expected, and the birds can now fly about the aviary we have made of a tent with the greatest ease.

Sept. 20.—Started the pigeons at daybreak, each with a message fastened to its legs. On throwing them up they commenced wheeling round the camp, but separated, one being chased by one of the large kites which are always hovering about the creek. After flying round in various directions with great speed they gradually drew across the creek, when we lost sight of three; the fourth, after making a large circle, pitched in a tree about half a mile off. After breakfast he was found under a bush, with a kite watching him; and the feathers of one of the

other pigeons was found not far off, having been killed. Of the two others nothing has been seen, and I hope that they got clear away, but I am much afraid that the experiment has proved a failure; however, I should have thought more of it if the pigeons had made a more decided start. Last night the wind changed from N.E. to S.W., and brought up a slight shower. This morning S.W., with heavy clouds, threatening rain. King improving slowly, but very weak. Turned out the white pigeon again this afternoon; he flew into a gum standing in the camp, and has taken up his quarters there—not a proper proceeding for a carrier-pigeon, according to my ideas.

Sept. 21.—Finding that it would not be prudent for King to go out for two or three days, I could no longer defer making a search for the spot where Mr. Burke died, and with such directions as King could give, I went up the creek this morning with Messrs. Brahe, Welsh, Wheeler, and Aitkin. We searched the creek upwards for eight miles, and at length, strange to say, found the remains of Mr. Burke lying among tall plants under a clump of box-trees, within 200 yards of our last camp, and not thirty paces from our track. It was still more extraordinary that three or four of the party and the two black boys had been close to the spot without noticing it. The bones were entire, with the exception of the hands and feet; and the body had been removed from the spot where it first lay, and where the natives had placed branches over it, to about five paces distance. I found the revolver which Mr. Burke held in his hand when he expired partly covered with leaves and earth, and corroded with rust. It was loaded and capped. We dug a grave close to the spot, and interred the remains wrapped in the union jack—the most fitting covering in which the bones of a brave but unfortunate man could take their last rest. On a box-tree, at the head of the grave, the following inscription is cut:—

R. O'H. B.
21   9   61.
A. H.

Sept. 22.—The pigeon still keeps its quarters at the camp, and comes down to feed now and then. I have removed the message, and shall leave it to its fate. It has been trying hard to rain for two or three days, but does not seem able; great clouds drift over, looking ready to burst, but only squeeze out two or three drops, and then pass over. I expect fully that it will clear up without rain; another dry season will make Cooper's Creek look fearfully miserable. When the hot weather comes on the water-holes will many of them be dry, unless filled by rain or a flood. I have written down King's narrative as much as possible in his own words. Shall annex it to this diary. Finished shoeing the horses.

Sept. 23.—Went down the creek to-day, in search of the natives. One of the party accompanied me, and we took two days' rations, in case it should be necessary to prolong our search. Two days after we camped here the natives left, and have not been seen since; and I could not think of leaving without showing them that we could

appreciate and reward the kindnesses they had shown to Burke's party, and particularly to King. For three miles we travelled over alluvial flats along the creek, timbered with box and large gums, and dotted with bean-trees, orange-trees of large size but at present without fruit, various kinds of acacias, and other bushes. To the right hand level flats and sand ridges, apparently tolerably grassed. We then came on a large reach of water, where four or five natives had just been fishing; their nets were lying on the sand to dry, and the fire yet burning. Not seeing any one about, and getting no answer to a cooeey, we went on. At three miles more we passed the first feeder of Straleski's Creek, going to the southward, and at a large reach of water below found the natives camped. They made a great commotion when we rode up, but seemed very friendly. I unpacked my blanket and took out specimens of the things I intended giving them—a tomahawk, a knife, beads, a looking-glass, comb, and flour and sugar. The tomahawk was the great object of attraction, after that the knife, but I think that the looking-glass surprised them most. On seeing their faces some seemed dazzled, others opened their eyes like saucers, and made a rattling noise with their tongues expressive of surprise. We had quite a friendly palaver, and my watch amused them immensely. When I gave them some of the sugar to taste, it was absurd to see the sleight of hand with which they pretended to eat it, I suppose from a fear of being poisoned, which I suppose is general, as our black boys are continually in dread lest the "wild black-fellows" should poison them by some means. I made them understand that they were to bring the whole tribe up next morning to our camp to receive their presents, and we parted the best of friends. The names of the principal men are Tohukulow, Mungallee (three in number), To-quunter, Pitchery (three in number, one a funny little man, with his head in a net and a kite's feather in it—another a tall man, with his beard tied in a point), Pruriekow, and Borokow.

Sept. 24.—This morning, about ten o'clock, our black friends appeared in a long procession, men, women, and children, or, as they here also call them, piccaninies; and at a mile distance they commenced bawling at the top of their voices as usual. When collected altogether on a little flat, just below our camp, they must have numbered between thirty and forty, and the uproar was deafening. With the aid of King, I at last got them all seated before me, and distributed the presents—tomahawks, knives, necklaces, looking-glasses, combs, among them. I think no people were ever so happy before, and it was very interesting to see how they pointed out one or another who they thought might be overlooked. The piccaninies were brought forward by their parents, to have red ribbon tied round their dirty little heads. One old woman, Carrawaw, who had been particularly kind to King, was loaded with things. I then divided 50lb. of sugar between them, each one taking his share in a Union Jack pocket handkerchief, which they were very proud of. The sugar soon found its way into their mouths; the flour, 50lb. of which I gave them, they at once called "white-fellow nardoo," and they explained that they understood that these things were given to them for having fed King. Some old clothes were then put on some

of the men and women, and the affair ended in several of our party and several of the blackfellows having an impromptu "corroboree," to the intense delight of the natives, and, I must say, very much to our own amusement. They left, making signs expressive of friendship, carrying their presents with them. The men all wore a net girdle, and of the women, some wore one of leaves, others of feathers. I feel confident that we have left the best impression behind us, and that the "white-fellows," as they have already learned to call us, will be looked on henceforth as friends, and that, in case of emergency, any one will receive the kindest treatment at their hands.

Sept. 25.—At camp 31. This morning I turned my face homewards. The object of our mission being fulfilled, I had to do so, but I return with a great regret at not being able to go on. We take back five months' rations from this date, at the scale we have been using, and which has proved sufficient. The party are in the best of health, the horses in fine order, and the camels none the worse for their journey, and decidedly in better health than when they left the Darling. On the edge of a country so well worth exploring, in a tolerably good season, and with the means I now have at my disposal, I feel how much might be done. We camped to-day at our last camp but one coming down the creek, making an easy stage for King. Got in by noon, as the horses were very fresh after their spell. The camels gave us a good deal of trouble this afternoon, and from a cause which may and probably will constantly occur. One of the male camels has taken to driving the females about, and fighting with the other male, Saml, who up to this time had been master. To-day the other camel was furious, and in spite of being short hobbled, and having his head tied down to his knee, chased the whole of the camels from the camp, ten minutes after they were let loose, and although Brahe went immediately after them, and was for three hours on their tracks, he was unable to overtake them. Coming back for a horse, he took Sandy with him, and cut across to where he had left the racks, running N. over some very rough stony country. It was dark before they returned, having found the camels some miles away. From this and similar occurrences, I find it very unwise to take male and female camels on a journey together. One is never safe for a day from their straying, and from continual fights between the male camels for mastery. The result is, that the camels are continually harassed, and watch each other instead of feeding. With either all male or all female camels there would be less, or certainly not more, trouble than with horses; and, with this drawback, I firmly believe in the suitability of camels for exploring.

Sept. 26.—Made ten miles, and camped where the creek forces a passage through the rocks.

Sept. 27.—Obliged to stay where we are, as one of the mares foaled during the night. Knocked the foal on the head. Blowing hot wind.

Sept. 28.—Camped at the fish-pond, having made only fifteen miles. King very tired; cannot ride on a camel, as he thought, and had to give him a horse to try if it would be easier for him. Dug up the things planted by Mr. Burke and Mr. Wills, and found the field-books

and papers all safe. All hands fishing this evening, and a large number of fish caught, varying from a quarter of a pound to three pounds and a-quarter. Blowing a strong hot wind from N. and N.E.; will dry up the surface water very fast.

Sept. 29.—The doctor does not consider that King should travel to-day, so shall remain here. Could not have a much better place on the creek—plenty of feed and abundance of fish. A dozen caught this morning weighed nearly twenty pounds. Two of the party caught seventy-two pounds weight from three o'clock to sundown. They are most excellent eating. I do not know any fish of as fine a flavour. Strong gale from N. and N.E., and very hot. If this goes on without rain we shall have some pushing to do before reaching Koolialto; and, without rain has fallen, I do not think we can depend with certainty on any water from Porina to Nunderungee Creek—about 180 miles.

Sept. 30.—Camped at our 28th camp. Surface water nearly all gone, and no feed. Found a small pool at the mouth of a gully, but all the other water in the creek was as salt as brine. Hot wind again.

Oct. 1.—Halted above our 27th camp, at a number of waterholes, where there was pretty good feed. Passed our black friends on the road, who invited us to stop and eat fish and nardoo, and have a corroboree. Strong hot wind from N.W. round to N.E.—the fifth day now; and it seems to have blown away every sign of clouds. The sky looks hard and blue, with a grey haze on the horizon, and the vegetation is withering fast. Where we camped happened to be not more than a couple of hundred yards from a large native camp, situated in a branch channel, and completely hidden by dense timber and scrub. When we arrived, all the men excepting three old fellows were away, and only the lubras and picaninnies were at home, in a terrible fright at so many white-fellows squatting down close to them. They began to pack up their things for a flight; but an amicable understanding being brought about, and some of the men returning, we were soon the best of friends. I distributed the few remaining presents, and they gave in return some chewed pitchery and nardoo balls. One old greybeard had been as far as Wonominta Creek, and could repeat the names of the various waters between here and that place, *via* Bulla; but I found him impenetrable on any other road. There were about twenty men, all well made and well fed, and several were old patriarchs, and some of them apparently old rascals, too. They were far more inclined to be troublesome and importunate than our friends lower down—particularly one tall young fellow, rubbed all over with red earth, who pestered me for a tomahawk. One of them had had his arm broken above the wrist, and roughly bandaged up with rags and grass cord; the doctor set it properly, and it was remarkable to see the perfect composure with which the blackfellow bore the operation. In assisting I had to use my clasp-knife to cut bark-splints, and laying it down beside me it of course vanished, and I saw no more of it; but strange to say, in the same place shortly afterwards one of the knives was found which I had given the blackfellows, which, I suppose, they had exchanged for mine, on the principle of the old

saying, that "exchange is no robbery." After a while the natives began to draw in too close to our camp, talking a good deal about our "portos," or bundles, so that we had to draw a line as a boundary, a hint they took at once, and all squatted down beyond it. At dusk I fired off two rockets, to their unbounded surprise, but they were not so alarmed as I expected, probably from feeling that we were kindly disposed towards them. I believe that the sight of us smoking, and seeing the smoke coming out of our mouths, alarmed them much more, as some made signs to put the pipe away, and others got up and walked off, looking behind them. At dark they retired to their camp.

Oct. 2.—This morning the natives came up and commenced a brisk trade in nets, grass-string girdles, boomerangs, and other things, for old clothes, rags, and such like valuable property. For part of an old blanket I obtained two boomerangs, a large staff used in digging roots, one of the long pointed sticks used in fishing, a stone tomahawk cemented into a boxwood handle, and the head of a larger one, about the size and shape of an American axe, which the proprietor, a tall old warrior with one very sinister eye, scraped up from the sand by his hut. The smaller tomahawk he dropped twice between his camp and ours, and pretended he had never had it, until I made him understand that I was not going to be done, when he burst out laughing, and sent his lubra back for it. The whole mob sat down by our camp, and observed us packing up with great interest, but were terribly frightened at the horses, far more so than at the camels. They accompanied us for half a mile on our road, and then waited looking after us for a while. Camped at some sand-hills near our 26th camp, the only water near being a pool of liquid mud, from which we obtained a small supply of water by draining the surface. In going up this was a fine channel. Day rather hot, but the wind from the S., and a great improvement on the last five of hot winds.

Oct. 3.—This morning the clouds began to bank up from the south, drawing northward, with every sign of a thunderstorm. During the time we were travelling, before reaching our camp, the clouds continued to gather in masses, threatening rain, but dispersed as they passed over towards an arch of blue sky to the north. The country much greener since we came down, owing to the two nights' rain we had. Camped at the remains of what had been a large sheet of water in one of the branches of the creek. It has now a very unpleasant taste of soda, and produces thirst rather than quenches it. Sent Phillips away after dinner on one of the spare horses, to run our track as far as possible before night among the sand-hills, to see if there was any water in the polygonum flats. The clouds still gathering, and thunder and heavy rain to the north-west and south-east. We lit a fire at dark on the edge of the plain, but had great difficulty in keeping it up, as the natives had burned all the deadwood near the water; by means of this, and rockets fired occasionally, Phillips returned about nine o'clock, having been ten miles on the track. He reported the water to be almost all dried up, and had only seen two small pools of mud. The night very dark, with thunder and lightning, but no rain.

Oct. 4.—Started late this morning, as I wished

all the horses to drink well before leaving the creek, and also as I had to send the camels two miles to fill the water-bags, this pool being scarcely drinkable. I went on ahead of the party to search for water, but did not leave the track for the ten miles Phillips had been over. The sand-hills are looking splendid, the two nights' rain having covered them with grass and herbage, and even the earthy flats between the ridges show some signs of vegetation. About three o'clock I came on four native children sleeping under the shade of a box-tree, and covered with nets. One waking suddenly, started up in a terrible fright at such an unusual sight, and ran off screaming into the polygonum, where I saw its mother peeping at me through a bush. When I called out to her to come she did so, but kept at a very respectful distance. I asked her for water, and to re-assure her gave her an old handkerchief. She got her children gathered round her, two on her back and one carrying a fourth, all of them screaming loudly, and having pointed out a little pool of mud, moved off to a sand-hill, where she commenced bawling to some of the natives, who seemed to be about half a mile off. I went off to hunt over the flat for water, and shortly heard shouts of "Gaw, gew," behind me, from three natives, who came running up in an excited state, each with a boomerang or a waddy. We soon, however, came to a friendly understanding by means of the few words I knew, and the promise of a knife decided them to show me the water. One of them, a jolly-looking young fellow, minus his front teeth, took the lead; the other two, both of them dressed in red paint and a head net, keeping a little on one side. We kept up a sort of conversation, and in half an hour came to their camp, a large hut on a sand-hill, with a small pool of water near, among the clay-pans. I was very much amused at the ceremonious way in which my guide led the way, pointing out the best road, and very earnestly making me notice the bushes in my way, as if I were in danger of falling over them. They gave me as usual a ball of obewed pitchery, and seemed very much surprised that neither I nor my horses cared about drinking. I found it quite impossible to make them understand that the waterhole was too small. My guide having received his knife, was now very anxious to have my shirt, which, of course, I objected to; and, as I could learn nothing more, I gave them a few matches and rode on my way. My four black friends, however, either out of politeness, or in the hopes of getting my shirt, followed me, and kept so close behind the tail of my horse, each with a waddy in his hand, that I thought it best to send them back to their camp, whither they went, after some yabbering among themselves. About three miles further on I found eight small channels of water in a polygonum flat, containing sufficient water for ourselves and our horses for two days. Camped here, when the party came up, in splendid feed.

Oct. 5.—Camped to-day, at the tank, which, with the channel by it, is brimful of water. The country looks beautiful, the sandhills are covered with flowers and bushes in full bloom, and swarm with birds of all kinds. It has every appearance of being spring here. Passed several fine channels of water by the track. Natives in various places scattered through these sandhills. It is very difficult to estimate the num-

ber of the blacks here, but I believe they cannot be far short of 400, belonging to Cooper's Creek.

Oct. 6.—Stokes' Ranges, Surprise Creek.—Left the tank this morning, carrying as much water as possible on the camels, and two horse loads, sufficient for ourselves for four days and one drink for the horses; calculating on making Koliati or Poria Creek, in four days. If I find water on the track I intend striking for Wilkie's Creek. The sandhills covered with grass and flowers, and even the bare clayey plains, and the miserable stony country between them and the ranges, had struggled into something resembling vegetation. The ranges, where we entered them, by Brahe's Gap, are not so high as where we crossed them more to the westward, but run in low ridges along wide stony valleys formed by the numerous gorges we found so difficult to cross. Mulga and acacia scrub everywhere, but not much feed; only saltbush and very short herbage grown since the rains. We were agreeably surprised by a fine waterhole in the first creek we came to, which proved to be the lowest of several of nearly the same size higher up the creek. I believe it to be about ten yards wide and eighty long, and some three or four feet deep. Distance, eighteen miles.

Oct. 7.—Stokes' Ranges, Keppel's Creek, lat. 28deg. 17min., lon. 142deg. 30min.—We were late in leaving camp this morning, as nineteen of the horses had followed the track back for several miles. The country travelled through for fifteen miles was much of the same character—wide stony flats surrounded by low ridges, and intersected by gum creeks coming from the gorges in a northerly direction. We passed through a succession of gaps, in each of which we found a creek with pools of clear rain-water, and from the very loose gravelly nature of the ground, I am inclined to believe that these creeks are still running slowly underground since the rain. At fifteen miles came on the south slopes of the range, with a wide view towards Koliatti and Poria. Camped on a small watercourse near its junction with Keppel's Creek. Two tolerable pools of water. Another make-believe thunder-storm to-night, with violent gusts of wind, but no rain, excepting at two places to the N.W., where it appeared to be raining, about a mile wide. Everything looks spring-like here.

Oct. 8.—Junction Camp, No. 21.—Crossed Keppel's Creek and travelled over stony slopes, for six miles, when we crossed the creek on to barren sandy plains. At three miles entered the sandhills and found the country terribly burned up, and no sign of water. Rain cannot have fallen here for some time. Made our old camp in twenty-two miles from Keppel's Creek, and found water still in the small creek, but the feed very dry and scanty.

October 9.—Poria Creek.—When the party started this morning I went to the westward of the track, and found that at a short distance the sandhills terminated in the gum forest and polygonum swamps before-mentioned. From a high sandhill I could see across these for many miles towards the range, in a westerly direction, and I believe that they also extend to or across Wilkie's Creek to the south. I found no water, but I am convinced that there are other channels similar

to the one we camped on last night which will contain water for months after rain. At Wilkie's Creek I again left the track, and followed the creek upwards, crossing several deep channels running in and out from it, and full of water. At a short distance I came on a large sheet of water, certainly more than a mile long, and about eighty feet wide, and with the couch grass growing on its banks, and large box timber, having a striking resemblance to some of the smaller branches of Cooper's Creek. It is a far finer watercourse than I had at first supposed. Made Poria Creek about two o'clock. The country very dry and parched—we seem, in one day's journey, to have travelled from spring into summer.

## WILLS' JOURNAL.

COOPER'S CREEK TO CARPENTARIA.

FIELD-BOOK NO. 1.

[The omissions in the diary are supplied by the information contained in the maps, with the exception of the last two days on the shore of the gulf.]

Sunday, Dec. 16, 1860.—The two horses having been shod, and our reports finished, we started at forty minutes past six a.m. for Eyre's Creek, the party consisting of Mr. Burke, myself, King, and Charley, having with us six camels, one horse, and three months' provisions. We followed down the creek to the point where the sandstone ranges cross the creek, and were accompanied to that place by Brahe, who would return to take charge of the depot. Down to this point the banks of the creek are very rugged and stony, but there is a tolerable supply of grass and saltbush in the vicinity. A large tribe of blacks came pestering us to go to their camp and have a dance, which we declined. They were very troublesome, and nothing but the threat to shoot them will keep them away; they are, however, easily frightened, and, although fine-looking men, decidedly not of a warlike disposition. They show the greatest inclination to take whatever they can, but will run no unnecessary risk in so doing. They seldom carry any weapons, except a shield and a large kind of boomerang, which I believe they use for killing rats, &c.; sometimes, but very seldom, they have a large spear; reed spears seem to be quite unknown to them. They are undoubtedly a finer and better looking race of men than the blacks on the Murray and Darling, and more peaceful, but in other respects I believe they did not compare favourably with them, for, from the little we have seen of them, they appear to be mean-spirited and contemptible in every respect.

Monday, Dec. 17.—We continued to follow down the creek. Found its course very crooked, and the channel frequently dry for a considerable distance, and then forming into magnificent waterholes, abounding in waterfowl of all kinds. The country on each side is more open than on the upper part of the creek. The soil on the plains is of a light earthy nature, supporting abundance of saltbush and grass. Most of the plains are lightly timbered, and the ground

is finer, and not cracked up, like at the head of the creek. Left Camp No. 67 at ten minutes of six a.m., having breakfasted before leaving. We followed the creek along from point to point, at first in a direction W.N.W. for about twelve miles, then about N.W. At about noon we passed the last water, a short distance beyond which the creek runs out on a polygonum (*Polygonum Cunninghamii*) flat; but the timber was so large and dense, that it deceived us into the belief that there was a continuation of the channel; on crossing the polygonum ground to where we expected to find the creek we became aware of our mistake. Not thinking it advisable to chance the existence of water a-head, we camped at the end of a large but shallow sheet of water in the sandy bed of the creek. The hole was about 150 links broad, and feet deep in most places. In most places the temperature of the water was almost incredibly high, which induced me to try it in several places. The mean of two on the shady side of the creek gave 97.4deg. As may be imagined, this water tasted disagreeably warm, but we soon cooled some in water-bags, and, thinking that it would be interesting to know what we might call cool, I placed the thermometer in a pannikin containing some that appeared delightfully cool, almost cold in fact; its temperature was, to our astonishment, 78deg. At half-past six, when a strong wind was blowing from south, and temperature of air had fallen to 80deg., the lowest temperature of water in the hose, that had been exposed to the full effect of evaporation for several hours, was 72deg. This water for drinking appeared positively cold—too low a temperature to be pleasant under the circumstances. A remarkable southerly squall came on between five and six p.m., with every appearance of rain. The sky however soon cleared, but the wind continued to blow in a squally and irregular manner from the same quarter at evening.

Wednesday, Dec. 19.—Started at a quarter past eight a.m. Leaving what seemed to be the end of Cooper's Creek, we took a course a little to the north of west, intending to try and obtain water in some of the creeks that Sturt mentioned that he had crossed, and at the same time to see whether they were connected with Cooper's Creek, as appeared most probable from the direction in which we found the latter running, and from the manner in which it had been breaking up into small channels flowing across the plains in a N. and N.N.W. direction. We left on our right the flooded flats on which this branch of the creek runs out, and soon came to a series of sand-ridges, the directions of which were between N. & W. and N.N.W. The country is well grassed, and supports plenty of saltbush. Many of the valleys are liable to be inundated by the overflow of the main creek. They have watercourses and polygonum flats, bordered with box-trees, but we met with no holes fit to hold a supply of water. At about ten miles we crossed a large earthy flat, lightly timbered with box and gum. The ground was very bad for travelling on, being much cracked up, and intersected by innumerable channels, which continually carried off the water of a large creek. Some of the valleys beyond this were very pretty, the ground being sound, and covered with fresh plants, which made them look beautifully green.

At fifteen miles, we halted where two large plains joined. Our attention had been attracted by some red-breasted cockatoos, pigeons, a crow, and several other birds, whose presence made us feel sure that there was water not far off; but our hopes were soon destroyed by finding a claypan just drying up. It contained just sufficient liquid to make the clay boggy. At ten minutes to seven p.m. we moved on, steering straight for Eyre's Creek, N.W. by N., intending to make a good night's journey, and avoid the heat of the day; but at a mile and a half we came to a creek, which looked so well that we followed it for a short distance, and finding two or three waterholes of good milky water, we camped for the night. This enabled me to secure an observation of the eclipse of Jupiter's I satellite, as well as some latitude observations. The night was so calm that I used the water as a horizon, but I find it much more satisfactory to take the mercury, for several reasons.

Thursday, Dec. 21 (20?).—We did not leave this camp until half-past eight, having delayed to refill the water-bags with the milky water, which all of us found to be a great treat again. It is certainly more pleasant to drink than the clear water, and, at the same time, more satisfying. Our course from here, N.W. by N., took us through some pretty country, lightly timbered and well grassed. We could see the line of creek timber winding through the valley on our left. At a distance of five miles there was a bush-fire on its banks, and beyond it the creek made a considerable bend to the S.W. At two miles further we came in sight of a large lagoon, bearing N. by W., and at three miles more we camped on what would seem the same creek as last night, near where it enters the lagoon. The latter is of great extent, and contains a large quantity of water, which swarms with wildfowl of every description. It is very shallow, but is surrounded by the most pleasing woodland scenery, and everything in the vicinity looks fresh and green. The creek near its junction with the lagoon contains some good water-holes, five to six feet deep. They are found in a sandy alluvium, which is very boggy when wet. There was a large camp of not less than forty or fifty blacks near where we stopped. They brought us presents of fish, for which we gave them some beads and matches. These fish we found to be a most valuable addition to our rations. They were of the same kind as we had found elsewhere, but finer, being nine to ten inches long, and two to three inches deep, and in such good condition that they might have been fried in their own fat. It is a remarkable fact, that these were the first blacks who had offered us any fish since we reached Cooper's Creek.

Friday, Dec. 21.—We left Camp 70 at half-past five a.m., and tried to induce one or two of the blacks to go with us, but it was of no use. Keeping our former course, we were pulled up at three miles by a fine lagoon, and then by the creek that flows into it; the latter being full of water, we were obliged to trace it a mile up before we could cross. I observed on its banks two wild plants of the gourd or melon tribe; one much resembling a stunted cucumber, the other, both in leaf and appearance of fruit, was very similar to a small model of a water melon (probably *Mucuna*

*micrantha*). The latter plant I also found at Camp 68. On tasting the pulp of the newly found fruit, which was about the size of a large pea, I found it to be so acid that it was with difficulty that I removed the taste from my mouth. At eight or nine miles from where we crossed the creek we passed another large lagoon, leaving it two miles on our left, and shortly afterwards we saw one nearly as far on our right. This last we should have availed ourselves of, but that we expected to find water in a creek which we could see, by the timber lining its banks, flowed from the lagoon on our left, and crossed our course a few miles ahead. We reached it at a distance of four or five miles further, and found a splendid waterhole, at which we camped. The creek at this point flows in a northerly direction, through a large lightly timbered flat, on which it partially runs out. The ground is, however, sound and well clothed with grass and salicaceous plants. Up to this point the country through we have passed has been of the finest description for pastoral purposes. The grass and saltbush are everywhere abundant, and water is plentiful, with every appearance of permanence. We met with porcupine grass (*Triodia pungens*, Br.) and only two sand-ridges before reaching Camp 71.

#### COOPER'S CREEK TO CARPENTARIA.

FIELD-BOOK NO. 2. LAT. 27° DEG. TO 25½° DEG.  
STATIONS 72 TO 78.

Saturday, Dec. 22.—At five minutes to five a.m. we left one of the most delightful camps we have had in the journey, and proceeded on the same course as before, N.W. by N., across some high ridges of loose sand, many of which were partially clothed with porcupine grass. We found the ground much worse to travel over than any we have yet met with. As the ridges were exceedingly abrupt and steep on their eastern side, and although sloping gradually towards the west, were so honeycombed in some places by the burrows of rats, that the camels were continually in danger of falling. At a distance of about six miles we descended from these ridges to undulating country of open box forest, where everything was green and fresh. There is an abundance of grass and salt bushes, and lots of birds of all descriptions. Several flocks of pigeons passed over our heads, making for a point a little to our right, where there is no doubt plenty of water, but we did not go off our course to look for it. Beyond the box forest, which kept away to the right, we again entered the sand-ridges, and at a distance of six miles passed close to a dry salt lagoon, the ridges in the vicinity of which are less regular in their form and direction, and contain nodules of limestone. The ground in the flats and claypans near has that encrusted surface that cracks under the pressure of the foot, and is a sure indication of the presence of saline deposits. At a distance of eight miles from the lagoon, we camped at the foot of a sand-ridge, jutting out on the Stony Desert. I was rather disappointed, but not altogether surprised, to find the latter nothing more nor less than the stony rises that we had before met with, only on a larger scale, and not quite so undulating. During the afternoon several crows came to feed on the plain. They came from an E.N.E. direction, no

doubt from a portion of the creek that flows through the forest that we left on our right. In the morning, as we were loading, a duck passed over, but it was too dark to see which way it went.

Sunday, Dec. 23.—At five a.m., we struck out across the desert in a W.N.W. direction. At four miles and a half we crossed a sand-ridge, and then returned to our N.W. by N. course. We found the ground not nearly so bad for travelling on as that between Bulloo and Cooper's Creek; in fact, I do not know whether it arose from our exaggerated anticipation of horrors or not, but we thought it far from bad travelling ground, and as to pasture, it is only the actually stony ground that is bare, and many a sheep run in, in fact, worse grazing than that. At fifteen miles we crossed another sand-ridge, for several miles around which there is plenty of grass and fine saltbush. After crossing this ridge, we descended to an earthy plain, where the ground was rather heavy, being in some places like pieces of slaked lime, and intersected by small water-courses. Flocks of pigeons rose from amongst the salt bushes and polygonum, but all the creeks were dry, although marked by lines of box timber. Several gunyahs of the blacks were situated near a water-hole that had apparently contained water very lately, and heaps of grass were lying about the plains, from which they had beaten the seeds. We pushed on, hoping to find the creeks assuming an improved appearance, but they did not, and at one o'clock we halted, intending to travel through part of the night. About sunset three flocks of pigeons passed over us, all going in the same direction, due north by compass, and passing over a ridge of sand in that direction. Not to have taken notice of such an occurrence would have been little short of a sin, so we determined to go eight or ten miles in that direction. Starting at seven o'clock p.m., we, at six miles, crossed the ridge over which the birds had flown, and came on a flat subject to inundation. The ground was at first hard and even, like the bottom of a clay pan, but at a mile or so we came on cracked earthy ground, intersected by numberless small channels running in all directions. At nine miles, we reached the bed of a creek running from east to west; it was only bordered by polygonum bushes, but as there was no timber visible on the plains, we thought it safer to halt until daylight, for fear we would miss the water. At daylight, when we had saddled, a small quantity of timber could be seen, at the point of a sand-ridge, about one and a half to two miles to the west of us, and on going there we found a fine creek, with a splendid sheet of water, more than a mile long, and averaging nearly three chains broad; it is, however, only two or three feet deep in most parts.

Monday, Dec. 24.—We took a day of rest on Gray's Creek, to celebrate Christmas. This was doubly pleasant, as we had never in our most sanguine moments anticipated finding such a delightful oasis in the desert. Our camp was really an agreeable place, for we had all the advantages of food and water attending a position on a large creek or river, and were at the same time free of the annoyance of the numberless ants, flies, and mosquitoes that are invariably met with amongst timber or heavy scrub.

Tuesday, Dec. 25.—We left Gray's Creek at half-past four a.m., and proceeded to cross the earthy rotten plains in the direction of Eyre's Creek. At a distance of about nine miles, we reached some lines of trees and bushes, which were visible from the top of the sand-ridge at Gray's Creek. We found them growing on the banks of several small creeks, which trend to the N. and N.N.W. At a mile and a-half further we crossed a small creek, N.N.E., and joining the ones above-mentioned. This creek contained abundance of water, in small detached holes, from fifty to one hundred links long, well shaded by steep banks and overhanging bushes. The water had a suspiciously transparent colour, and a slight trace of brackishness, but the latter was scarcely perceptible. Near where the creek joined them is a sand-hill, and a dense mass of fine timber. The smoke of a fire indicated the presence of blacks, who soon made their appearance, and followed us for some distance, beckoning us away to the N.E. We, however, continued our course N.W. by N., but, at a distance of a mile and a-half, found that the creeks did not come round as we expected, and that the fall of the water was in a direction nearly opposite to our course, or about west to east. We struck off N.W. for a high sand-ridge, from which we anticipated seeing whether it were worth while for us to follow the course of the creeks we had crossed. We were surprised to find all the water-courses on the plains trending rather to the south of east; and at a distance of three miles, after changing our course, and when we approached the sand-hills towards which we had been steering, we were agreeably pulled up by a magnificent creek, coming from the N.N.W., and running in the direction of the fire we had seen. We had now no choice but to change our course again, for we could not have crossed even if we had desired to do so. On following up the south bank of the creek, we found it soon keeping a more northerly course than it had where we first struck it. This fact, together with magnitude and general appearance, lessened the probability of its being Eyre's Creek, as seemed at first very likely from their relative positions and directions. The day being very hot, and the camels tired from travelling over the earthy plains, which, by the by, are not nearly so bad as those at the head of Cooper's Creek, we camped at one o'clock p.m., having traced the creek up about five miles, not counting the bends. For the whole of this distance we found not a break or interruption of water, which appears to be very deep. The banks are from twenty to thirty feet above the water, and very steep; they are clothed near the water's edge with mint and other weeds, and on the top of each side there is a belt of box trees and various shrubs. The lower part of the creek is bounded towards the north by a high red sand-ridge, and on the south side is an extensive plain, intersected by numerous water-courses, which drain off the water in flood time. The greater portion of the plain is at present very bare, but the stalks of dry grass show that after rain or floods there will be a good crop on the harder and well-drained portion, but I believe the loose earthy portion supports no vegetation at any time. The inclination of the ground from the edge of the creek bank towards the plain is in many places very considerable. This I should

take to indicate that the flooding is or has been at one time both frequent and regular.

Wednesday, Dec. 26.—We started at five a.m., following up the creek from point to point of the bends. Its general course was at first N. by W., but at about six miles the sand ridge on the west closed in on it, and at this point it takes a turn to the N.N.E. for half-a-mile, and then comes round suddenly N.W. Up to this point, it had been rather improving in appearance than otherwise, but in the bend to the N.W. the channel is very broad, its bed being limestone rock and indurated clay; is for a space of five or six chains quite dry, then commences another waterhole, the creek keeping a little more towards N. We crossed the creek here, and struck across the plain on a due N. course, for we could see the line of timber coming up to the sand-ridges in that direction, for a distance of seven or eight miles. We did not touch the creek, and the eastern sand-ridge receded to a distance, in some places of nearly three miles, from our line, leaving an immense extent of grassy plain between it and the creek. The distinctly marked feature on the lower part of this creek is, that whenever the main creek is on one side of a plain, there is always a fine billybong on the opposite side, each of them almost invariably sticking close to the respective sand-ridges. Before coming to the next bend of the creek, a view from the top of a sand-hill showed me that the creek receives a large tributary from the N.W., at about two miles above where we had crossed it. A fine line of timber, running up to the N.W., joined an extensive tract of box forest, and the branch we were following was lost to view in a similar forest towards the N. The sand-ridge was so abrupt when we came to the creek, that it was necessary to descend into its bed through one of the small ravines adjoining it. We found it partially run out, the bed being sand, and strewed with nodules of lime, some of which were one and a-half to two feet long. They had apparently been formed in the sand-downs by infiltration.

#### COOPER'S CREEK TO CARPENTARIA.

FIELD BOOK NO. 3. LAT. S. 25½ DEG. TO 23½ EG. STATIONS 78 TO 85.

Sunday, Dec. 30.—Finding that the creek was trending considerably towards the east, without much likelihood of altering its course, we struck off from it, taking a ten days' supply of water, as there were ranges visible to the north, which had the appearance of being stony. A N.E. by N. course was first taken for about seven miles, in order to avoid them. The whole of this distance was over alluvial earthy plains, the soil of which was firm, but the vegetation scanty.

#### COOPER'S CREEK TO CARPENTARIA.

FIELD-BOOK NO. 4. CAMP 85 TO 90. LAT. 23½ DEG. TO 22½ DEG. FINE COUNTRY—TROPICS.

Saturday, Jan. 5.—On leaving Camp 84 we found slight, but distinct indications of rain in the groves, and a few blades of grass and small weeds in the little depressions on the plain. These indications were, however, so slight that but for the fact of our having found surface



water in two holes near our camp, we should hardly have noticed them. At a distance of about two miles, in a N.N.E. direction, we came to a creek with a long, broad, shallow waterhole. The well-worn paths, the recent tracks of natives, and the heaps of shells, on the contents of which the latter had feasted, showed at once that this creek must be connected with some creek of considerable importance. The camels and horses being greatly in need of rest, we only moved up about half a mile, and camped for the day.

Sunday, Jan. 6.—Started at twenty minutes to six o'clock, intending to make an easy day's stage along the creek. As we proceeded up in a northerly direction, we found the waterhole to diminish in size very much, and at about two and a-half miles the creek ran out in a lot of small water-courses. At the upper end of the creek we found in its bed what appeared to be an arrangement for catching fish. It consisted of a small oval mud paddock, about 12ft. by 3ft., the sides of which were about nine inches above the bottom of the hole and the top of the fence, covered with long grass, so arranged that the ends of the blades overhung scantily by several inches the sides of the hole. As there was no sign of timber to the N., we struck off to N.W. by N. for a fine line of timber that came up from the S.W., and seemed to run parallel with the creek we were about to leave. At a distance of about three miles we reached the bank of a fine creek, and containing a sheet of water two chains broad, at least fifteen feet deep in the middle. The banks are shelving, sandy, and lightly clothed with box trees and various shrubs. On starting to cross the plains towards this creek, we were surprised at the bright green appearance of strips of land, which look in the distance like swamps; on approaching some of them we found that there had been a considerable fall of rain in some places, which had raised a fine crop of grass and por-ulac (*portulaca oleracea*, L.), wherever the soil was of a sandy and light nature, but the amount of moisture had been insufficient to affect the hard clayey ground, which constitutes the main portion of the plain. The sight of two native companions feeding here, added greatly to the encouraging prospects; they are the only specimens of that bird that I remember to have seen on that side of the Darling.

Monday, Jan. 7.—We started at half-past four a.m. without water, thinking that we might safely rely on this creek for one day's journey. We, however, found the line of timber soon begin to look small; at three miles the channel contained only a few pools of surface water. We continued across the plains on a due north course, frequently crossing small watercourses, which had been filled by the rain, but were fast drying up. Here and there as we proceeded, dense lines of timber on our right showed that the creek came from the east of north. At a distance of thirteen miles we turned to the N.N.E., towards a fine line of timber. We found a creek of considerable dimensions, that had only two or three small waterholes; but as there was more than sufficient for us, and very little feed for the beasts anywhere else, we camped. I should have liked this camp to have been in a more prominent and easily recognized position, as it happens to be almost exactly on the tropic of Capricorn. The

tremendous gale of wind that we had in the evening and night prevented me from taking a latitude observation, whereas I had some good ones at the last camp and at Camp 86. My reckoning cannot be far out. I found on taking out my instruments one of the spare thermometers was broken, and the glass of my aneroid barometer cracked—the latter, I believe, not otherwise injured. This was done by the camel having taken it into his head to roll while the pack was on his back.

Tuesday, January 8.—Started at a quarter past five a.m., with a load of water, determined to be independent of all creeks and watercourses. At a mile and a-half found surface water in a small creek, and at a mile further water in two or three places on the open plains. The country we crossed for the first ten miles consists of fine open plains of firm argillaceous soil, too stiff and hard to be affected by the small quantity of rain that has fallen as yet. They are subject to inundations from the overflow of a number of small creeks which intersect them in a direction E.N.E. to W.S.W. Nearly all the creeks are lined with box-trees and shrubs, in a tolerably healthy state. Of the remains of dead trees, there is only a fair proportion to the living ones. After traversing a plain of greater extent than the rest, we, at ten miles, reached the creek, proportionately large and important looking. The channel, however, at the point where we struck it, was deep, level, and dry, but I believe there is water in it not far off; for there were some red-breasted cockatoos in the trees, and native parrots on each side. On the north side there is a part bearing off to the N.N.W. The mirage on the plain to the south of the creek was stronger than I have before seen it. There appear to be sheets of water within a few yards of one, and it looks sufficiently smooth and glassy to be used for an artificial horizon. To the westward of the plains some fine sand-hills were visible nearly in the direction in which the creek flowed. To the north of the creek the country undergoes a great change. At first there is a little earthy land subject to inundation. The soil then becomes more sandy, the stony pans in which water collects after rain; the whole country is slightly undulating, lightly timbered and splendidly grassed. A number of small disconnected creeks are scattered about, many of which contained water, protected from the sun and wind by a luxuriant growth of fine grasses and small bushes. We passed one or two little rises of sand and pebbles, on which were growing some trees quite new to me; but for the seed pods, I should have taken them for a species of *casuarina*, although the leaf-stalks have not the jointed peculiarities of those plants. The trunks and branches are like the sheoak, the leaves like those of a pine; they droop like a willow, and the seed is small, flat, in a large flat pod about six inches by three-quarters of an inch. As we proceeded, the country improved at every step. Flocks of pigeons rose and flew off to the eastward, and fresh plants met our view on every rise; everything green and luxuriant. The horse licked his lips, and tried all he could to break his nose-string in order to get at the food. We camped at the foot of a sandy rise, where there was a large stony pan with plenty of water, and where the feed was equal in quality, and superior as to variety, to any that I have seen in Australia,

excepting perhaps on some soils of volcanic origin.

Wednesday, Jan. 9.—Started at five minutes past five without water, trusting to get a supply of water from the rain that fell during the thunderstorm. Traversed six miles of undulating plains covered with vegetation richer than ever. Several ducks rose from the little creeks as we passed, and flocks of pigeons were flying in all directions. The richness of the vegetation is evidently not suddenly arising from chance thunderstorms, for the trees and bushes on the open plain are everywhere healthy and fresh-looking; very few dead ones are to be seen, besides which the quantity of dead and rotten grass which, at present, almost overgrows in some places the young blades, shows that this is not the first crop of the kind. The grasses are numerous, and many of them unknown to me, but they only constitute a moderate portion of the herbage; several kinds of spurious vetches and portulacæ, as well as salicaceæ add to the luxuriance of the vegetation. At seven miles we found ourselves in an open forest country, where the feed was good, but not equal to what we had passed, neither had it been visited by yesterday's rain. We soon emerged again on open plains, but the soil being of a more clayey nature, they were not nearly so much advanced in vegetation as the others. We found surface water in several places, and at one spot disturbed a fine bustard which was feeding in the long grass. We did not see him until he flew up. I should have mentioned that one flew over our camp last evening, in a northerly direction. This speaks well for the country and climate. At noon we came to a large creek, the course of which was from E.N.E. to W.S.W. The sight of white gum trees in the distance had raised hopes which were not at all damped on a close inspection of the channel. At the point where we struck it, there was certainly no great quantity of water; the bed was broad and sandy, but its whole appearance was that of an important watercourse, and the large gums which line its banks, together with the improved appearance of the soil, and the abundance of feed in the vicinity, satisfied us as to the permanency of the water and the value of the discovery. Although it was so early in the day, and we were anxious to make a good march, yet we camped here, as it seemed to be almost a sin to leave such good quarters. The bed of the creek is loose sand, through which the water freely permeates; it is, however, sufficiently coarse not to be boggy, and animals can approach the water without any difficulty.

Thursday, Jan. 10.—At twenty minutes past five a.m., we left our camp with a full supply of water, determined to risk no reverses, and to make a good march. I should mention that last evening we had been nearly deafened by the noise of the cicadas, and but for our large fires should have been kept awake all night by the mosquitoes. A walk of two miles across a well-grassed plain brought us to a belt of timber, and we soon afterwards found ourselves pulled up by a large creek, in which the water was broad and deep. We had to follow up the bank of the creek in a N.E. direction for nearly a mile before we could cross, when to our joy we found that it was flowing, not a muddy stream from the effects of recent floods, but a small rivulet of pure

water, as clear as crystal. The bed of the river at this place is deep and rather narrow. The water flows over sand and pebbles, winding its way between clumps of melaleuca and gum saplings. After leaving the river, we kept our old course due north, crossing in a distance of one mile three creeks with gum trees on their banks. The soil of the flats through which they flow is a red loam of fair quality, and well grassed. Beyond the third creek is a large plain, parts of which are very stony; and this is bounded towards the east by a low stony rise, partly composed of decayed and honey-combed quartz rock *in situ*, and partly of water-worn pebbles and other alluvial deposits. At about two miles across this plain, we reached the first of a series of small creeks, with deep water-holes. These creeks and holes have the characteristics peculiar to water-courses which are found in flats formed from the alluvial deposits of schistose rocks. The banks are on a level with the surrounding ground, and are irregularly marked by small trees or only by tufts of long grass, which overhang the channel, and frequently hide it from one's view, even when within a few yards. At about five miles from where we crossed the river, we came to the main creek in these flats, Patten's Creek. It flows along at the foot of a stony range, and we had to trace it up nearly a mile in a N.N.E. direction before we could cross it. As it happened, we might almost as well have followed its course up the flat, for at a little more than two miles we came to it again. We recrossed it at a stony place just below a very large water-hole, and then continued our course over extensive plains, not so well grassed as what we had passed before, and very stony in some places. At eight miles from Patten's Creek, we came to another, running from S.W. to S.E. There was plenty of water in it, but it was evidently the result of recent local rains. On the banks was an abundance of good feed, but very little timber.

Friday, Jan. 11.—Started at five a.m., and in the excitement of exploring fine well-watered country, forgot all about the eclipse of the sun, until the reduced temperature and peculiarly gloomy appearance of the sky drew our attention to the matter. It was then too late to remedy the deficiency, so we made a good day's journey, the moderation of the mid-day heat, which was only about 86deg., greatly assisting us. The country traversed has the most verdant and cheerful aspect; abundance of feed and water everywhere. All the creeks seen to-day have a course more or less to E. by S. The land improves in appearance at every mile. A quantity of rain has fallen here and to the south, and some of the flats are suitable for cultivation if the regularity of the seasons will admit.

#### COOPER'S CREEK TO CARPENTARIA.

FIELD-BOOK NO. 5. CAMP 92 to 98.

LAT. 22½DEG. to 21½DEG. STANDISH RANGES.

Saturday, Jan. 12.—We started at five a.m., and keeping as nearly as possible a due N. course, traversed for about eight miles a splendid flat, through which flow several fine well watered creeks, lined with white gum trees. We then entered a series of alaly low sandstone ranges, amongst which

were some well-grassed *afayotadnp,r* tealno! tw in the main gullies. The more stony portions are, however, covered with porcupine grass, and here and there with mallee. Large ant-hills are very numerous; they vary in height from two feet and a half to four feet. There was a continuous rise perceptible all the way in crossing the ranges, and from the highest portion, which we reached at a distance of about seven miles, we had a pretty good view of the country towards the north. As far as we could see in the distance, and bearing due north, was a large range, having somewhat the outline of a granite mountain. The east end of this range just comes up to the magnetic north; the left of this, and bearing N.N.W., is a single conical peak, the top of which only is visible. Further to the west there were some broken ranges, apparently sandstone; to the east of north the tops of very distant and apparently higher ranges were seen, the outline of which was so indistinct that I can form no idea as to their character. The intermediate country below us appeared alternations of fine valleys and stony ranges, such as we had just been crossing. From here a descent of two miles brought us to a creek having a northern course, but on tracing it down for about a mile we found it turn to the south-east, and join another from the north. We crossed over to the latter on a N. by W. course, and camped on the west bank. It has a broad sandy channel; the water-holes are large but not deep; the banks are bordered with fine white gums, and are in some places very scrubby. There is abundance of rich green feed everywhere in the vicinity. We found numerous indications of blacks having been here, but saw nothing of them. It seems remarkable that where their tracks are so plentiful we should (have seen) none since we left King's Creek. I observed that the natives here climb trees like those on the Murray, &c., in search of some animal corresponding in habits to the opossum, which they get out of the hollow branches in a similar manner. I have not yet been able to ascertain what the animal is.

Sunday, Jan. 13.—We did not leave camp this morning until half-past seven, having delayed for the purpose of getting the camels' shoes on—a matter in which we were eminently unsuccessful. We took our breakfast before starting, for almost the first time since leaving the depot. Having crossed the creek, our course was due north as before, until at about six miles we came in sight of the range a-head, when we took a north-half-east direction, for the purpose of clearing the eastern front of it. We found the ground more sandy than what we had before crossed, and a great deal of it even more richly grassed. Camp 93 is situated at the junction of three sandy creeks, in which there is abundance of water. The sand is loose, and the water permeates freely, so that the latter may be obtained delightfully cool and clear by sinking anywhere in the beds of the creeks.

#### COOPER'S CREEK TO CARPENTARIA.

FIELD-BOOK NO. 6. LAT. 21½ DEG. TO 20½ DEG. STATIONS 98 TO 105. UPPER PART OF CLONCURRY.

Saturday, Jan. 19.—Started from Camp 98 at half-past five o'clock a.m., and, passing to the north-west of Mount Forbes, across a fine and well-

grassed plain, kept at first a north by east direction. At a distance of three miles the plain became everywhere stony, being scattered over with quartz pebbles; and a little further on we came to low quartz ranges, the higher portions of which are covered with porcupine grass, but the valleys are well clothed with a variety of coarse and rank herbage. At about five miles we crossed a creek with a sandy bed, which has been named Green's Creek. There were blacks not far above where we crossed, but we did not disturb them. After crossing the creek, we took a due north course, over very rugged quartz ranges of an auriferous character. Pieces of iron ore, very rich, were scattered in great numbers over some of the hills. On our being about to cross one of the branch creeks in the low range, we surprised some blacks—a man, who, with a young fellow, apparently his son, was upon a tree cutting out something, and a lubra with a picaninny. The two former did not see us until I was nearly close to them, and then they were dreadfully frightened. Jumping down from the trees, they started off, shouting what sounded to us very like "Joe, Joe." Thus disturbed, the lubra, who was some distance from them, just then caught sight of the camels and the remainder of the party as they came over the hill into the creek, and this tended to hasten their flight over the stones and porcupine grass. Crossing the range at the head of this creek, we came on a gully running north, down which we proceeded, and soon found it open out into a creek at two or three points, in which we found water. On this creek we found the first specimen of a eucalyptus, which has a very different appearance from the members of the gum-tree race. It grows as high as a good-sized gum-tree, but with the branches less spreading; in shape it much resembles the elm; the foliage is dark, like that of the light-wood; the trunk and branches are covered with a grey bark, resembling in outward appearance that of the box-tree. Finding that the creek was trending too much to the eastward, we struck off to the north again, and at a short distance came on a fine creek running about S.S.E. As it was now about time to camp, we travelled it up for about a mile and a half, and came to a fine waterhole in a rocky basin, at which there were lots of birds.

#### COOPER'S CREEK TO CARPENTARIA.

FIELD BOOK NO. 7. LAT. 20½ DEG. TO 19½ DEG.; CAMPS 105 TO 112. MIDDLE PART OF CLONCURRY.

Sunday, Jan. 27.—Started from Camp 105, five minutes past two in the morning. We followed along the bends of the creek by moonlight, and found the creek wind about very much, taking on the whole a N.E. course. At about five miles it changed somewhat its features; from a broad and sandy channel, winding about through gum tree flats, it assumes the unpropitious appearance of a straight narrow creek, running in a N.N.E. direction between high perpendicular earthy banks. After running between three or four miles in this manner, it took a turn to the west, at which point there is a fine water-hole, and then assumed its original character. Below this we found water at several places; but it all seemed to be either from surface drainage or from springs in the sand. The land in the vicinity of the

creek appears to have received plenty of rain, the vegetation everywhere being green and fresh; but there is no appearance of the creek having flowed in this part of the channel for a considerable period. Palm trees are numerous, and some bear an abundance of small round dates (nuts) just ripening. These palms give a most picturesque and pleasant appearance to the creek.

Wednesday, Jan. 30.—Started at half-past seven a.m., after several unsuccessful attempts at getting Golah out of the bed of the creek. It was determined to try bringing him down until we could find a place for him to get out at; but after going in this way two or three miles, it was found necessary to leave him behind, as it was almost impossible to get him through some of the waterholes, and had separated King from the party, which was a matter for very serious consideration, when we found blacks hiding in the box-trees close to us.

#### COOPER'S CREEK TO CARPENTARIA.

FIELD-BOOK NO. 8. CAMPS 112 119. LAT. 19½ DEG. TO 17 DEG. 53 MIN. LOWER PART OF CLONCURRY.

#### RETURNING FROM CARPENTARIA TO COOPER'S CREEK.

#### FIELD-BOOK NO. 9. SUNDAY, FEBRUARY.

Finding the ground in such a state from the heavy falls of rain, that the camels could scarcely be got along, it was decided to leave them at Camp 119, and for Mr. Burke and I to proceed towards the sea on foot. After breakfast we accordingly started, taking with us the horse and three days' provisions. Our first difficulty was in crossing Billy's Creek, which we had to do where it enters the river, a few hundred yards below the camp. In getting the horse in here, he got bogged in a quicksand bank so deeply as to be unable to stir, and we only succeeded in extricating him by undermining him on the creek side, and then lunging him into the water. Having got all the things in safety, we continued down the river bank, which bent about from east to west, but kept a general north course. A great deal of the land was so soft and rotten, that the horse, with only a saddle and about twenty-five pounds on his back, could scarcely walk over it. At a distance of about five miles we again had him bogged in crossing a small creek, after which he seemed so weak, that we had great doubts about getting him on. We, however, found some better ground close to the water's edge where the sandstone rock runs out, and we stuck to it as far as possible. Finding that the river was bending about so much that we were making very little progress in a northerly direction, we struck off due north, and soon came on some table-land where the soil is shallow and gravelly, and clothed with box and swamp gums. Patches of the land were very boggy, but the main portion was sound enough. Beyond this we came on an open plain, covered with water up to one's ankles. The soil here was a stiff clay, and the surface very uneven, so that between the tufts of grass one was frequently knee-deep in water. The bottom, however, was sound, and no fear of bogging. After floundering through this for several miles, we came to a path formed by the blacks, and there were distinct signs

of a recent migration in a southerly direction. By making use of this path, we got on much better, for the ground was well trodden and hard. At rather more than a mile, the path entered a forest, through which flowed a nice water-course, and we had not gone far before we found places where the blacks had been camping. The forest was intersected by little pebbly rises on which they had made their fires, and in the sandy ground adjoining some of the former had been digging yams\*, which seemed to be so numerous that they could afford to leave lots of them about, probably having only selected the very best. We were not so particular, but ate many of those that they had rejected, and found them very good. About half-a-mile further, we came close on a blackfellow, who was coiling by a camp fire, whilst his gin and picaninny were yabbering alongside. We stopped for a short time to take out some of the pistols that were on the horse, and that they might see us before we were so near as to frighten them. Just after we stopped, the black got up to stretch his limbs, and after a few seconds looked in our direction. It was very amusing to see the way in which he stared, standing for some time as if he thought he must be dreaming, and then, having signalled to the others, they dropped on their haunches and shuffled off in the quietest manner possible. Near their fire was a fine hut, the best I have ever seen, built on the same principle as those at Cooper's Creek, but much larger and more complete. I should say a dozen blacks might comfortably coil in it together. It is situated at the end of the forest, towards the north, and looks out on an extensive marsh, which is at times flooded by the sea-water. Hundreds of wild geese, plover, and pelicans, were enjoying themselves in the watercourses on the marsh, all the water on which was too brackish to be drinkable, except some holes that are filled by the stream that flows through the forest. The neighbourhood of this encampment is one of the prettiest we have seen during the journey. Proceeding on our course across the marsh, we came to a channel through which the sea-water enters. Here we passed three blacks, who, as is universally their custom, pointed out to us, unasked, the best part down. This assisted us greatly, for the ground we were taking was very boggy. We moved slowly down, about three miles, and then camped for the night. The horse Billy being completely baked, next morning we started at daybreak, leaving the horse short-hobbled.

Tuesday, Feb. 19, 1861.—Boocha's Camp.

Wednesday, Feb. 20.—Pleasant Camp, 5, R.

Thursday, Feb. 21.—Recovery Camp 6, R.—Between four and five o'clock a heavy thunderstorm broke over us, having given very little warning of its approach. There had been lightning and thunder towards S.E. and S. ever since noon yesterday. The rain was incessant and very heavy for an hour and a-half, which made the ground so boggy that the animals could scarcely walk over it. We nevertheless started at ten minutes to seven a.m., and after floundering along for half an hour, halted for breakfast. We then moved on again, but soon found that the travelling was too heavy for the camels, so camped for the remainder of the day. In the

\* The Dioscorea of Carpentaria.

afternoon the sky cleared a little, and the sun soon dried the ground, considering. Shot a pheasant, and much disappointed at finding him all feathers and claws. This bird nearly resembles a cock pheasant in plumage; but in other respects it bears more the character of the magpie or crow; the feathers are remarkably wiry and coarse.

Friday, Feb. 22.—Camp 7, R.—A fearful thunderstorm in the evening about eight p.m., E.S.E., moving gradually round to S. The flashes of lightning were so vivid and incessant as to keep up a continual light for short intervals, overpowering even the moonlight. Heavy rain and strong squalls continued for more than an hour, when the storm moved off W.N.W.; the sky remained more or less overcast for the rest of the night, and the following morning was both sultry and oppressive, with the ground so boggy as to be almost impassable.

Saturday, Feb. 23.—Camp 8, R.—In spite of the difficulties thrown in our way by last night's storm, we crossed the creek. We were shortly afterwards compelled to halt for the day, on a small patch of comparatively dry ground near the river. The day turned out very fine, so that the soil dried rapidly; and we started in the evening to try a trip by moonlight. We were very fortunate in finding sound ground along a billibong, which permitted of our travelling for about five miles up the creek, when we camped for the night. The evening was most oppressively hot and sultry—so much so, that the slightest exertion made one feel as if he were in a state of suffocation. The dampness of the atmosphere prevented any evaporation, and gave one a helpless feeling of lassitude that I have never before experienced to such an extent. All the party complained of the same sensations, and the horses showed distinctly the effect of the evening trip, short as it was. We had scarcely turned in half an hour when it began to rain, some heavy clouds having come up from the eastward, in place of the layer of small *cirrocumuli* that before ornamented the greater portion of the sky. These clouds soon moved on, and we were relieved from the dread of additional mud. After the sky cleared, the atmosphere became rather cooler, and less sultry: so that, with the assistance of a little smoke to keep the mosquitoes off, we managed to pass a tolerable night.

Sunday, Feb. 24.—Camp 9, R.—Comparatively little rain has fallen above the branch creek with the running water. The vegetation, although tolerably fresh, is not so rank as that we have left. The water in the creek is muddy but good, and has been derived merely from the surface drainage of the adjoining plains. The *Malacene* continues in this branch creek, which creeps along the foot of the ranges.

Monday, Feb. 25.—Camp 10, R.—There has been very little rain on this portion of the creek since we passed down. There was, however, no water at all then at this point. At the Tea-tree Spring, a short distance up the creek, we found plenty of water in the sand, but it had a disagreeable taste, from the decomposition of leaves and the presence of mineral matter—probably iron. There seems to have been a fair share of rain along here, everything is so very fresh and green;

and there is water in many of the channels we have [crossed].

Tuesday, Feb. 26.—Caple Tree Camp, 11, R.

Thursday, Feb. 28.—Reedy Gully Camp, 12, R.—Came into the Reedy Gully Camp about midnight on Tuesday, the 26th. Remained there throughout the day on Wednesday, starting at 2 a.m. on Thursday.

Friday, March 1.—Camp of the Three Crows, 13, R.

Saturday, March 2.—Saltbrush Camp, 14, R.—Found Golah. He looks thin and miserable. Seems to have fretted a great deal, probably at finding himself left behind, and he has been walking up and down the tracks till he has made a regular pathway. Could find no sign of his having been far off it, although there is splendid feed to which he could have gone. He began to eat as soon as he saw the other camels.

Sunday, March 3, 1861.—Eureka Camp, 15, R.—In crossing a creek by moonlight Charley rode over a large snake. He did not touch him, and we thought it was a log until he struck it with the stirrup-iron. We then saw that it was an immense snake, larger than any that I have ever before seen in a wild state. It measured eight feet four inches in length, and seven inches in girth round the belly. It was nearly the same thickness from the head to within twenty inches of the tail, it then tapered rapidly. The weight was eleven pounds and a half. From the tip of the nose to five inches back the neck was black, both above and behind; throughout the rest of the body the under part was yellow, and the sides and back had irregular brown transverse bars on a yellowish brown ground. I could detect no poisonous fangs, but there were two distinct rows of teeth in each jaw, and two small claws or nails, about three-eighths of an inch long, one on each side of the vent.

Monday, March 4.—Feasting Camp, 16, R.—Shortly after arriving at Camp 16 we could frequently hear distant thunder towards the east, from which quarter the wind was blowing. During the afternoon there were frequent heavy showers, and towards evening it set in to rain steadily, but lightly. This lasted until about 8 p.m., when the rain ceased, and the wind got round to W.; the sky, however, remained overcast until late in the night, and then cleared for a short time; the clouds were soon succeeded by a dense fog, or mist, which continued until morning. The vapour having then risen occupied the upper air in the form of light cir-stratus and cumuli clouds.

Tuesday, March 5.—Camp 17, R.—Started at 2 a.m. on a S.S.W. course, but had soon to turn in on the creek, as Mr. Burke felt very unwell, having been attacked by dysentery since eating the snake. He now felt giddy, and unable to keep his seat. At 6 a.m. Mr. Burke feeling better, we started again, following along the creek, in which there was considerably more water than when we passed down. We camped at 2.15 p.m. at a part of the creek where the date trees\* were very numerous, and found the fruit nearly ripe, and very much improved on what it was when we were here before.

Wednesday, March 6.—Camp 18, R.—Arrived at the former camp, and find the feed richer than

\* Probably *Livistona*.

over, and the ants just as troublesome. Mr. Burke is a little better, and Charley looks comparatively well. The dryness of the atmosphere seems to have a beneficial effect on all. We found, yesterday, that it was a hopeless matter about Golah, and we were obliged to leave him behind, as he seemed to be completely done up, and could not come on, even when the pack and saddle were taken off.

Thursday, March 7.—Big-Tree Camp 19, R. Palm-Tree Camp No. 104, and 20 latitude; by observation coming down, 20deg. 21min. 40sec.—There is less water here than there was when we passed down, although there is evidence of the creek having been visited by considerable floods during the interval. Feed is abundant, and the vegetation more fresh than before. Mr. Burke almost recovered, but Charley is again very unwell, and unfit to do anything; he caught cold last night through carelessness in covering himself.

Friday, March 8.—Camp 20, R.—Followed the creek more closely coming up than going down. Found more water in it generally.

Saturday, March 9.—Camp 21, R.—Reached our former camp at 1.30 p.m. Found the herbage much dried up, but still plenty of feed for the camels.

Sunday, March 10.—Camp 22, R.—Camped at the junction of a small creek from the westward, a short distance below our former camp, there being plenty of good water here, whereas the supply at Specimen Camp is very doubtful.

Monday, March 11.—Camp 23, R.—Halted for breakfast at the Specimen Camp at 7.15 a.m. Found more water and feed there than before. Then proceeded up the creek, and got safely over the most dangerous part of our journey. Camped near the head of the gap, in a flat about two miles below our former camp at the gap.

Tuesday, March 12.—Camp 24, R.

Wednesday, March 13.—Camp 25, R.—Rained all day, so heavily that I was obliged to put my watch and field book in the pack, to keep them dry. In the afternoon the rain increased, and all the creeks became flooded. We took shelter under some fallen rocks, near which was some feed for the camels, but the latter was of no value, for we had soon to remove them up amongst the rocks out of the way of the flood, which fortunately did not rise high enough to drive us out of the cave; but we were obliged to shift our packs to the upper part. In the evening the water fell as rapidly as it had risen, leaving everything in a very boggy state. There were frequent light showers during the night.

Thursday, March 14.—Camp 26, R.—Sandstone Cave.—The water in the creek having fallen sufficiently low, we crossed over from the cave, and proceeded down the creek. Our progress was slow, as it was necessary to keep on the stony ridge instead of following the flats, the latter being very boggy after the rain. Thinking that the creek must join Scratchley's near our old camp, we followed it a long way, until, finding it trend altogether too much eastward, we tried to shape across for the other creek, but were unable to do so from the boggy nature of the intervening plain.

Friday, March 15.—Camp 27, R.

Saturday, March 16.—Camp 28, R.—Scratchley's Creek.

Sunday, March 17.—Camp 29, R.

Monday, March 18.—Camp 30, R.

Tuesday, March 19.—Camp 31, R.

Wednesday, March 20.—Camp 32, R.—Feasting Camp.—Last evening the sky was clouded about nine p.m., and a shower came down from the north. At ten o'clock it became so dark that we camped on the bank of the creek, in which was a nice current of clear water. To-day we halted, intending to try a night journey. The packs we overhauled, and left nearly 60lb. weight of things behind. They were all suspended in a pack from the branches of a shrub close to the creek. We started at a quarter to six, but were continually pulled up by billibongs and branch creeks, and soon had to camp for the night. At the junction of the two creeks just above [are] the three cones, which are three remarkable small hills to the eastward.

Thursday, March 21.—Humid Camp, 33, R.—Unable to proceed on account of the slippery and boggy state of the ground. The rain has fallen very heavily here to-day, and every little depression in the ground is either full of water or covered with alimy mud. Another heavy storm passed over during the night, almost [extinguishing] the miserable fire we were able to get up with our very limited quantity of water-logged and green wood. Having been so unfortunate last night, we took an early breakfast this morning, at Camp 33, which I have named the Humid Camp, from the state of dampness in which we found everything there; and crossing to the east bank of the main creek, proceeded in a southerly direction nearly parallel with the creek. Some of the flats near the creek contain the richest alluvial soil, and are clothed with luxuriant vegetation. There is an immense extent of plain, back, of the finest character for pastoral purposes, and the country bears every appearance of being permanently well watered. We halted on a large billibong at noon, and were favoured during dinner by a thunderstorm, the heavier portion of which missed us, some passing north and some south, which was fortunate, as it would otherwise have spoiled our baking process, a matter of some importance just now. We started again at seven o'clock, but the effects of the heavy rain prevented our making a good journey.

Friday, March 22.—Muddy Camp, 34, R.—Had an early breakfast this morning, and started before sunrise. Found that the wet swampy ground that checked our progress last night was only a narrow strip, and that had we gone a little further we might have made a fine journey. The country consisted of open, well-grassed, pebbly plains, intersected by numerous small channels, all containing water. Abundance of fine rich *portulaca* was just bursting into flower along all these channels, as well as on the greater portion of the plain. The creek that we camped on last night ran nearly parallel with us throughout this stage. We should have crossed it to avoid the stony plains, but were prevented by the flood from so doing.

Saturday, March 23.—Mosquito Camp, 35, R.—Started at a quarter to six, and followed down the creek, which has much of the charac-

teristic appearance of the River Burke, where we crossed it on our up journey. The land in the vicinity greatly improves as one goes down, becoming less stony and better grassed. At eleven o'clock we crossed a small tributary from the eastward, and there was a distant range of considerable extent visible in that direction. Halted for the afternoon in a bend, where there was tolerable feed, for the banks are everywhere more or less scrubby.

Sunday, March 24.—Three-hour Camp, 36, R.

Monday, March 25.—Native Dog Camp, 27 R. Started at half-past five, looking for a good place to halt for the day. This we found at a short distance down the creek, and immediately discovered that it was close to Camp 89 of our up journey. Had not expected that we were so much to the westward. After breakfast took some time altitudes, and was about to go back to last camp for some things that had been left, when I found Gray behind a tree, eating skilligolee. He explained that he was suffering from dysentery, and had taken the flour without leave. Sent him to report himself to Mr. Burke, and went on. He, having got King to tell Mr. Burke for him, was called up and received a good thrashing. There is no knowing to what extent he has been robbing us. Many things have been found to run unaccountably short. Started at seven o'clock, the camels in first-rate spirits. We followed our old course back (S.) The first portion of the plains had much the same appearance as when we came up, but that near camp 88, which then looked so fresh and green, is now very much dried up, and we saw no signs of water anywhere. In fact, there seems to have been little or no rain about here since we passed. Soon after three o'clock we struck the first of several small creeks or billibongs, which must be portions of the creek with the deep channel that we crossed on going up, we being now rather to the westward of our former course. From here, after traversing about two miles of the barest clay plain, devoid of all vegetation, we reached a small watercourse, most of the holes in which contained some water of a milky or creamy description. Fine saltbush and portulac being abundant in the vicinity, we camped here at 4.30 a.m. When we started in the evening, a strong breeze had already sprung up in the south, which conveyed much of the characteristic feeling of a hot wind. It increased gradually to a force of five and six, but by eleven o'clock had become decidedly cool, and was so chilly towards morning that we found it necessary to throw on our ponchos. A few cir.-cum. clouds were coming up from the east when we started, but we left them behind, and nothing was visible during the night but a thin hazy veil. The gale continued throughout the 26th, becoming warmer as the day advanced. In the afternoon it blew furiously, raising a good deal of dust. The temperature of air at 4 p.m. was 94deg. in the shade. Wind trees all day.

Tuesday, March 26.—Saltbush Camp, 38, R.

Wednesday, March 27.—Camp 39, R.

Thursday, March 28.—Camp 40, R.

Friday, March 29.—Camp 41, R.—Camels' last feast. Fine green feed at this camp. Plenty of vine and young polygonums on the small billibongs.

Saturday, March 30.—Camp 42, R.—Boocha's Rest.—Employed all day in cutting up, jerking

and eating Boocha. The day turned out as favourable for us as we could have wished, and a considerable portion of the meat was completely jerked before sunset.

Sunday, March 31.—Camp 43, R.—Mia Mia Camp.—Plenty of good dry feed, various shrubs, salt bushes, including cotton bush and some coarse kangaroo grass; water in the hollows on the stony pavement. The neighbouring country chiefly composed of stony rises and sand ridges.

Monday, April 1.—Camp 43, R.

Tuesday, April 2.—Camp 44, R.—Thermometer broken.

Wednesday, April 3.—Camp 45, R.—Salt Meat Camp.

Thursday, April 4.—Camp 46, R.—The Plant Camp.

Friday, April 5.—Camp 47, R.—Oil Camp.—Earthy and clayey plains, generally sound, and tolerably grassed; but in other places bare saltbush, withered.

Saturday, April 6.—Wild Duck Camp, 48, R.—Earthy flats, cut into innumerable watercourses, [succeeded by] fine open plains, generally very bare, but having in some places patches of fine saltbush. The dead stalks of portulac and mallows show that those plants are very plentiful in some seasons. [Towards noon came upon] earthy plains and numerous billibongs.

Sunday, April 7.—Camp 49, R.—Find the water and feed much dried up. Nearly all the water we have met with has a slightly brackish taste of a peculiar kind, somewhat resembling in flavour potassium tartrate of soda.

Monday, April 8.—Camp 50, R.—Camped a short distance above Camp 76. The creek here contains more water, and there is a considerable quantity of green grass in its bed, but it is much dried up since we passed before. Halted fifteen minutes to send back for Gray, who gammoned he could not walk. Some good showers must have fallen lately, as we have passed surface water on the plains every day. In the latter portion of to-day's journey the young grass and portulac are springing freshly in the flats and on the sides of the sand ridges.

Tuesday, April 9.—Camp 51, R.—Camped on the bank of the creek, where there is a regular field of saltbush, as well as some grass in its bed, very acceptable to the horse, who has not had a proper feed for the last week until last night, and is, consequently, nearly knocked up.

Wednesday, April 10.—Camp 52, R.—Remained at Camp 52, R., all day to cut up and jerk the meat of the horse Billy, who was so reduced and knocked up for want of food that there appeared little chance of his reaching the other side of the desert; and as we were running short of food of every description ourselves, we thought it best to secure his flesh at once. We found it healthy and tender, but without the slightest trace of fat in any portion of the body.

Thursday, April 11.—Plenty of water in creek down to this point.

Friday, April 12.—Extensive earthy plains, intersected by numerous watercourses.

Saturday, April 13.—Small watercourses lined with lakes. Plenty of saltbush and chrysanthemums on either side. Camped on Stony Desert.

[Note by Transcriber.—Up to this point, as it appears from Mr. Wills's field-book, the expedi-

tion never passed a day in which they did not traverse the banks of, or cross, a creek or other watercourse.]

Sunday, April 14.

Monday, April 15.—It commenced to rain lightly at five a.m. this morning, and continued raining pretty steadily throughout the day. Owing to the wet and the exertion of crossing the numerous sand ridges, Linda became knocked up about four o'clock, and we had to halt at a clay-pan amongst the sand hills. [The party seems to have crossed a creek near a native camp, about 10 a.m.]

Tuesday, April 16.

Wednesday, April 17.—This morning, about sunrise, Gray died. He had not spoken a word distinctly since his first attack, which was just as we were about to start.

Thursday, April 18.—Another creek and native camp were passed.

Friday, April 19.—Camped again without water, on the sandy bed of the creek, having been followed by a lot of natives who were desirous of our company; but as we preferred camping alone, we were compelled to move on until rather late, in order to get away from them. The night was very cold. A strong breeze was blowing from the S., which made the fire so irregular that, as on the two previous nights, it was impossible to keep up a fair temperature. Our general course throughout the day had been S.S.E.

Saturday, April 20.

Sunday, April 21.—Arrived at the dépôt this evening, just in time to find it deserted. A note left in the plant by Brahe communicates the pleasing information that they have started to-day for the Darling; their camels and horses all well and in good condition. We and our camels being just done up, and scarcely able to reach the dépôt, have very little chance of overtaking them. Brahe has fortunately left us ample provisions to take us to the bounds of civilization, namely:—Flour, 50lb.; rice, 20lb.; oatmeal, 60lb.; sugar, 60lb.; and dried meat, 15lb. These provisions, together with a few horse-shoes and nails and some odds and ends, constitute all the articles left, and place us in a very awkward position in respect to clothing. Our disappointment at finding the dépôt deserted may easily be imagined;—returning in an exhausted state, after four months of the severest travelling and privation, our legs almost paralyzed, so that each of us found it a most trying task only to walk a few yards. Such a leg-bound feeling I never before experienced, and hope I never shall again. The exertion required to get up a slight piece of rising ground, even without any load, induces an indescribable sensation of pain and helplessness, and the general lassitude makes one unfit for anything. Poor Gray must have suffered very much many times when we thought him shamming. It is most fortunate for us that these symptoms, which so early affected him, did not come on us until we were reduced to an exclusively animal diet of such an inferior description as that offered by the flesh of a worn out and exhausted horse. We were not long in getting out the grub that Brahe had left, and we made a good supper off some oatmeal porridge

and sugar. This, together with the excitement of finding ourselves in such a peculiar and almost unexpected position, had a wonderful effect in removing the stiffness from our legs. Whether it is possible that the vegetables can so have affected us, I know not; but both Mr. Burke and I remarked a most decided relief and a strength in the legs greater than we had had for several days. I am inclined to think that but for the abundance of portulac that we obtained on the journey, we should scarcely have returned to Cooper's Creek at [all].

Memo.—Verbally transcribed from the field-books of the late Mr. Wills. Very few words, casually omitted in the author's manuscript, have been added in brackets. A few botanical explanations have been appended. A few separate general remarks referring to this portion of the diary will be published, together with the meteorological notes to which they are contiguous. No other notes in reference to this portion of the journey are extant.

Nov. 5, 1861.

FRED. MUELLER.

## JOURNAL OF TRIP FROM COOPER'S CREEK TOWARDS ADELAIDE.

APRIL, 1861.

The advance party of the Victorian Exploring Expedition, consisting of Burke, Wills, and King (Gray being dead), having returned from Carpentaria on the 21st April in an exhausted and weak state, and finding that the dépôt party left at Cooper's Creek had started for the Darling, with their horses and camels fresh and in good condition, deemed it useless to attempt to overtake them, having only two camels, both done up, and being so weak themselves as to be unable to walk more than four or five miles a day. Finding also that the provisions left at the dépôt for them would scarcely take them to Menindie, started down Cooper's Creek for Adelaide, *via* Mount Hopeless, on the morning of the 23rd April, intending to follow as nearly as possible the route taken by Gregory; by so doing they hope to be able to recruit themselves and the camels, whilst sauntering slowly down the creek, and to have sufficient provisions left to take them comfortably, or at least without risk, to some station in South Australia. Their equipment consists of the following articles:—Flour, 50lb.; sugar, 60lb.; rice, 20lb.; oatmeal, 60lb.; jerked meat, 25lb.; ginger, 2lb.; salt, 1lb. (Then follow some native words, with their meanings).

Tuesday, April 23.—From Dépôt.—Having collected together all the odds and ends that seemed likely to be of use to us, in addition to provisions left in the plant, we started at a quarter past nine a.m., keeping down the southern bank of the creek. We only went about five miles, and camped at half past eleven on a billabong, where the feed was pretty good. We find the change of diet already making a great improvement in our spirits and strength. The weather is delightful, days agreeably warm, but the nights very chilly. The latter is more noticeable from our deficiency in clothing, the dépôt party having



taken all the reserve things back with them to the Darling. To Camp No. 1.

Wednesday, April 24.—From Camp No. 1.—As we were about to start this morning some blacks came by, from whom we were fortunate enough to get about twelve pounds of fish for a few pieces of straps and some matches, &c. This is a great treat for us, as well as a valuable addition to our rations. We started at a quarter past eight p.m. on our way down the creek, the blacks going in the opposite direction—little thinking that in a few miles they would be able to get lots of pieces for nothing, better than those they had obtained from us. To Camp No. 2.

Thursday, April 25.—From Camp No. 2.—Awoke at five o'clock, after a most refreshing night's rest. The sky was beautifully clear and the air rather chilly. The terrestrial radiation seems to have been considerable, and a slight dew had fallen. We had scarcely finished breakfast when our friends the blacks, from whom we obtained the fish, made their appearance with a few more, and seemed inclined to go with us and keep up the supply. We gave them some sugar, with which they were greatly pleased. They are by far the most well-behaved blacks we have seen on Cooper's Creek. We did not get away from the camp until half-past nine a.m., continuing our course down the most southern branch of the creek, which keeps a general S.W. course. We passed across the stony point which abuts on one of the largest waterholes in the creek, and camped at half-past twelve about a mile below the most dangerous part of the rocky path. At this latter place we had an accident that might have resulted badly for us. One of the camels fell while crossing the worst part, but we fortunately got him out with only a few cuts and bruises. The waterhole at this camp is a very fine one, being (to Camp No. 3) several miles long and on an average about chains broad. The waterfowl are numerous, but rather shy—not nearly so much so, however, as those on the creeks between here and Carpenteria, and I am convinced the shyness of the latter, which was also remarked by Sturt on his trip to Eyre's Creek, arises entirely from the scarcity of animals, both human and otherwise, and not from any peculiar mode of catching them that the blacks may have.

Friday, April 26.—From Camp No. 3.—Last night was beautifully calm, and comparatively warm, although the sky was very clear. Re-loaded the camels by moonlight this morning, and started at a quarter to six. Striking off to the south of the creek, we soon got on a native path, which leaves the creek just below the stony ground, and takes a course nearly west across a piece of open country, bounded on the south by sand-ridges, and on the north by the scrubby ground which flanks the bank of the creek at this part of its course. Leaving the path on the right at a distance of three miles, we turned up a small creek which passes down between some sand-hills; and finding a nice patch of feed for the camels at a waterhole, we halted at fifteen minutes past seven for breakfast. We started again at fifty minutes past nine a.m., continuing our westerly course along the path we crossed to the S. of the watercourse above the water, and proceeded over the most splendid saltbush country that one could wish to see,

bounded on the left by sand-hills, whilst to the right the peculiar-looking flat-topped sandstone ranges form an extensive amphitheatre, through the far side of the arena of which may be traced the dark line of creek timber. At twelve o'clock we camped in the bed of the creek, at Camp No. 4, our last camp on the road down from the Gulf, having taken four days to do what we then did in one. This comparative rest, and the change in diet, have also worked wonders, however; the leg-tied feeling is now entirely gone, and I believe that in less than a week we shall be fit to undergo any fatigue whatever. The camels are improving, and seem capable of doing all that we are likely to require of them. To Camp No. 4.

Saturday, April 27.—First part of night clear, with a light breeze from S. Temperature at midnight 10 deg. (Reaumur); towards morning there were a few cir. cum. clouds passing over N.E. to S.W., but these disappeared before daylight; at five a.m. the temperature was 75 deg. (Reaumur). We started at six o'clock, and, following the native path, which at about a mile from our camp takes a southerly direction, we soon came to the high sandy alluvial deposit, which separates the creek at this point from the stony rises. Here we struck off from the path, keeping well to the S. of the creek, in order that we might meet in a branch of it that took a southerly direction. At twenty minutes past nine we came in on the creek again where it runs due south, and halted for breakfast at a fine waterhole, with fine fresh feed for the camels. Here we remained until noon, when we moved on again, and camped at one o'clock on a general course; having been throughout the morning S.W. eight miles. The weather is most agreeable and pleasant; nothing could be more favourable for us up to the present time. The temperature in the shade at half-past ten a.m. was 17.5 (Reaumur), with a light breeze from S., and a few small cir. cum. clouds towards the N. I greatly feel the want of more instruments, the only things I have left being my watch, prism compass, pocket compass, and one thermometer (Reaumur). To Camp No. 5.

Sunday, April 28.—From Camp No. 5.—Morning fine and calm, but rather chilly. Started at a quarter to five a.m., following down the bed of a creek in a westerly direction, by moonlight. Our stage was, however, very short, for about a mile one of the camels (Landa) got bogged by the side of a waterhole, and although we tried every means in our power, we found it impossible to get him out. All the ground beneath the surface was a bottomless quicksand, through which the beast sank too rapidly for us to get bushes or timber fairly beneath him, and being of a very sluggish stupid nature, he could never be got to make sufficiently strenuous efforts towards extricating himself. In the evening, as a last chance, we let the water in from the creek, so as to buoy him up and at the same time soften the ground about his legs, but it was of no avail. The brute lay quietly in it as if he quite enjoyed his position. To Camp No. 6.

Monday, April 29.—From Camp No. 6.—Finding Landa still in the hole, we made a few attempts at extricating him, and then shot him; and after breakfast commenced cutting off what flesh we could get at, for jerking.

**Tuesday, April 30.**—Camp No. 6.—Remained here to-day for the purpose of drying the meat, for which process the weather is not very favourable. (Meteorological note follows.)

**Wednesday, May 1.**—From Camp No. 6.—Started at twenty minutes to nine, having loaded our only camel, Rajah, with the most necessary and useful articles, and packed up a small swag each of bedding and clothing for our own shoulders. We kept on the right bank of the creek for about a mile, and then crossed over at a native camp to the left, where we got on a path running due west, the creek having turned to the N. Following the path, we crossed an open plain, and then sand-ridges, whence we saw the creek straight ahead of us, running nearly S. again. The path took us to the southernmost point of the bend, in a distance of about two and a-half miles from where we had crossed the creek, thereby saving us from three to four miles, as it cannot be less than six miles round by the creek. To Camp No. 7.

**Thursday, May 2.**—Camp No. 7.—Breakfasted by moonlight, and started at half-past six. Following down the left bank of the creek in a westerly direction, we came, at a distance of six miles, on a lot of natives, who were camped on the bed of a creek. They seemed to have just breakfasted, and were most liberal in the presentations of fish and cake. We could only return the compliment by some fish-hooks and sugar. About a mile further on, we came to a separation of the creek, where what looked like the main branch looked towards the south. This channel we followed, not, however, without some misgivings as to its character, which were soon increased by the small and unfavourable appearance that the creek assumed. On our continuing along it a little further, it began to improve, and widened out, with fine waterholes of considerable depth. The banks were very steep, and a belt of scrub lined it on either side. This made it very inconvenient for travelling, especially as the bed of the creek was full of water for considerable distances. At eleven a.m., we halted until half-past one p.m., and then moved on again, taking a S.S.W. course for about two miles, when, at the end of a very long waterhole, it breaks into billibongs, which continue splitting into sandy channels until they are all lost in the earthy soil of a box forest. Seeing little chance of water ahead, we turned back to the end of the long waterhole, and camped for the night. On our way back, Rajah showed signs of being done up. He had been trembling greatly all the morning. On this account his load was further lightened to the amount of a few pounds, by the doing away with the sugar, ginger, tea, cocones, and two or three tin-plates. To camp No. 8.

**Friday, May 3.**—Camp No. 8.—Started at seven a.m., striking off in a northerly direction for the main creek. At a mile and a-half came to a branch which (left unfinished.) To camp No. 9.

**Saturday, May 4.**—Junction from Camp No. 9.—Night and morning very cold. Sky clear, almost calm; occasionally a light breath of air from south. Rajah appears to feel the cold very much. He was so stiff this morning as to be scarcely able to get up with his load. Started to return down the creek at 6.45, and halted for breakfast at nine a.m., at the same spot as we breakfasted at yesterday. Proceeding from there

down the creek, we soon found a repetition of the features that were exhibited by the creek examined on Thursday. At a mile and a-half we came to the last water-hole, and below that the channel became more sandy and shallow, and continued to send off billibongs to the south and west, slightly changing its course each time until it disappeared altogether in a north-westerly direction. Leaving King with the camel, we went on a mile or two to see if we could find water, and being unsuccessful, we were obliged to return to where we had breakfasted, as being the best place for feed and water.

**Sunday, May 5.**—To Camp No. 10.—Started by myself to reconnoitre the country in a southerly direction, leaving Mr. Burke and King with the camel at Camp No. 10. Travelled S.W. by S. for two hours, following the course of the most southerly billibongs. Found the earthy soil becoming more loose and cracked up, and the box-track gradually disappearing. Changed course to west, for a high sand-ridge, which I reached in one hour and a half, and continuing in the same direction to one still higher, obtained from it a good view of the surrounding country. To the north were the extensive box forests bounding the creek on either side. To the east earthy plains intersected by water-courses and lines of timber, and bounded in the distance by sand-ridges. To the south the projection of the sand-ridge partially intercepted the view; the rest was composed of earthy plains, apparently clothed with chrysanthemums. To the westward, another but smaller plain was bounded also by high sand-ridges, running nearly parallel with the one on which I was standing. This dreary prospect offering no encouragement for me to proceed, I returned to Camp 10 by a more direct and better route than I had come, passing over some good saltbush land, which borders on the billibongs to the westward. (Here follow some meteorological notes.)

**Monday, May 6.**—From Camp No. 10 back to Camp No. 9.—Moved up the creek again to Camp No. 9, at the junction, to breakfast, and remained the day there. The present state of things is not calculated to raise our spirits much. The rations are rapidly diminishing; our clothing, especially the boots, are all going to pieces, and we have not the materials for repairing them properly; the camel is completely done up, and can scarcely get along, although he has the best of feed, and is resting half his time. I suppose this will end in our having to live like the blacks for a few months.

**Tuesday, May 7.**—Camp No. 9.—Breakfasted at daylight, but when about to start, found that the camel would not rise, even without any load on his back. After making every attempt to get him up, we were obliged to leave him to himself. Mr. Burke and I started down the creek to reconnoitre. At about eleven miles we came to some blacks fishing. They gave us some half-a-dozen fish each for luncheon, and intimated that if we would go to their camp, we should have some more, and some bread. I tore in two a piece of macintosh stuff that I had, and Mr. Burke gave one piece, and I the other. We then went on to their camp, about three miles further. They had caught a considerable quantity of fish, but most of them were small. I noticed three different kinds—a small one that they call "cur" five to six inches long, and not broader than

eel; the common one, with large coarse scales, termed "peru;" and a delicious fish, some of which run from a pound to two pounds weight. The natives call them "cawilchi." On our arrival at the camp, they led us to a spot to camp on, and soon afterwards brought a lot of fish and bread, which they call nardoo. The lighting a fire with matches delights them, but they do not care about having them. In the evening, various members of the tribe came down with lumps of nardoo and handfuls of fish, until we were positively unable to eat any more. They also gave us some stuff they call beggery, or pedgery. It has a highly intoxicating effect, when chewed even in small quantities. It appears to be the dried stems and leaves of some shrub.

Wednesday, May 8.—Left the blacks' camp at half-past seven, Mr. Burke returning to the junction, whilst I proceeded to trace down the creek. This I found a shorter task than I had expected, for it soon showed signs of running out, and at the same time kept considerably to the north of west. There were several fine waterholes within about four miles of the camp I had left, but not a drop all the way beyond that, a distance of seven miles. Finding that the creek turned greatly towards the north, I returned to the blacks' encampment; and, as I was about to pass, they invited me to stay. So I did so, and was even more hospitably entertained than before, being on this occasion offered a share of a gunyah, and supplied with plenty of fish and nardoo, as well as a couple of nice fat rats. The latter I found most delicious. They were baked in the skins. Last night was clear and calm, but unusually warm. We slept by a fire, just in front of the blacks' camp. They were very attentive in bringing us firewood, and keeping the fire up during the night.

Thursday, May 9.—Parted from my friends, the blacks, at half-past seven, and started for Camp No. 9.

Friday, May 10.—Camp No. 9.—Mr. Burke and King employed in jerking the camel's flesh, whilst I went out to look for the nardoo seed, for making bread. In this I was unsuccessful, not being able to find a single tree of it in the neighbourhood of the camp. I however tried boiling the large kind of bean which the blacks call padlin; they boil easily, and when shelled are very sweet, much resembling in taste the French chestnut. They are to be found in large quantities nearly everywhere.

Saturday, May 11.—Camp No. 9.—To-day Mr. Burke and King started down the creek for the blacks' camp, determined to ascertain all particulars about the nardoo. I have now my turn at the meat jerking, and must devise some means for trapping the birds and rats, which is a pleasant prospect after our dashing trip to Carpenteria, having to hang about Cooper's Creek, living like the blacks.

Sunday, May 12.—Mr. Burke and King returned this morning, having been unsuccessful in their search for the blacks, who, it seems, have moved over to the other branch of the creek. Decided on moving out on the main creek to-morrow, and then trying to find the natives of the creek.

Monday, May 13.—Shifted some of the things, and brought them back again, Mr. Burke thinking it better for one to remain here with them

for a few days, so as to eat the remains of the fresh meat, whilst the others went in search of the blacks and nardoo.

Tuesday, May 14.—Mr. Burke and King gone up the creek to look for blacks, with four days' provisions. Self employed in preparing for a final start on their return. This evening Mr. Burke and King returned, having been some considerable distance up the creek, and found no blacks. It is now settled that we plant the things, and all start together the day after to-morrow. The weather continues very fine; the nights calm, clear, and cold, and the days clear, with a breeze generally from S., but to-day from E., for a change. This makes the first part of the day rather cold. When clouds appear they invariably move from W. to E.

Wednesday, May 15.—Camp 9.—Planting the things, and preparing to leave the creek for Mount Hopeless.

Thursday, May 16.—Having completed our planting, &c., started up the creek to the second blacks' camp, a distance of about eight miles. Finding our loads rather too heavy, we made a small plant here of such articles as could best be spared. (Here follow a few meteorological notes.)

Friday, May 17.—Nardoo.—Started this morning on a blacks' path, leaving the creek on our left, our intention being to keep a south-easterly direction until we should cut some likely-looking creek, and then to follow it down. On approaching the foot of the first sand-hill King caught sight in the flat of some nardoo seeds, and we soon found that the flat was covered with them. This discovery caused somewhat of a revolution in our feelings, for we considered that with the knowledge of this plant we were in a position to support ourselves, even if we were destined to remain on the creek and wait for assistance from town. Crossing some sand-ridges running N. and S., we struck into a creek which runs out of Cooper's Creek, and followed it down. At about five miles we came to a large waterhole, beyond which the watercourse runs out on extensive flats and earthy plains. Calm night; sky cleared towards morning, and it became very cold. A slight easterly breeze sprang up at sunrise, but soon died away again. The sky again became overcast, and remained so throughout the day. There was occasionally a light breeze from south, but during the greater portion of the day it was quite calm. Fine halo around the sun in the afternoon.

Saturday, May 18.—Camp No. 16.—(No entry except the following meteorological entry on an opposite page, which may probably refer to this date.) Calm night, sky sometimes clear and sometimes partially overcast with veil clouds.

Sunday, May 19.—(No entry beyond this citation of date.)

Monday, May 20.—(No entry beyond this citation of date.)

Tuesday, May 21.—Creek. (No entry beyond this citation of date.)

Wednesday, May 22.—Cooper's Creek. (No entry beyond citation of date.)

Thursday, May 23.—(No entry beyond this citation of date.)

Friday, May 24.—Started with King to celebrate the Queen's birthday by fetching from Nardoo Creek what is now to us the staff of life. Returned at a little after two p.m., with a fair

supply, but find the collecting of the seed a slower and more troublesome process than could be desired. Whilst picking the seed, about eleven o'clock a.m., both of us heard distinctly the noise of an explosion, as if of a gun, at some considerable distance. We supposed it to have been a shot fired by Mr. Burke; but on returning to the camp found that he had not fired nor had heard the noise. The sky was partially overcast with high cum. str. clouds, and a light breeze blew from the east, but nothing to indicate a thunderstorm in any direction.

Saturday, May 25.—(No entry beyond this.)

Sunday, May 26.—(No entry beyond this.)

Monday, May 27.—Started up the creek this morning for the dépôt, in order to deposit journals and a record of the state of affairs here. On reaching the sand-hills below where Lands was bogged I passed some blacks on a flat collecting nardoo seed. Never saw such an abundance of the seed before. The ground in some parts was quite black with it. There were only two or three gins and children, and they directed me on, as if to their camp, in the direction I was before going; but I had not gone far over the first sand-hill when I was overtaken by about twenty blacks, bent on taking me back to their camp, and promising any quantity of nardoo and fish. On my going with them, one carried the shovel, and another insisted on taking my swag, in such a friendly manner that I could not refuse them. They were greatly amused with the various little things I had with me. In the evening they supplied me with abundance of nardoo and fish; and one of the old men, Poko Tinnamira, shared his gunyah with me. . . . The night was very cold, but by the help of several fires—[The entry suddenly stops, but in the margin of the opposite page are written the names of several natives, and certain native words, with their meanings in English.]

Tuesday, May 28.—Left the blacks' camp, and proceeded up the creek. Obtained some mussels near where Lands died, and halted for breakfast. Still felt very unwell from the effects of the constipation of the bowels. The stools are exceedingly painful. After breakfast, travelled on to our third camp coming down. Puy to Blowr. (etc.)

Wednesday, May 29.—Started at seven o'clock, and went on to the duck-holes, where we breakfasted coming down. Halted there at thirty minutes past nine for a feed, and then moved on. At the stones saw a lot of crows quarrelling about something near the water. Found it to be a large fish, of which they had eaten a considerable portion. Finding it quite fresh and good, I decided the quarrel by taking it with me. It proved a most valuable addition to my otherwise scanty supper of nardoo porridge. This evening I camped very comfortably in a mia-mia, about eleven miles from the dépôt. The night was very cold, although not entirely cloudless. A brisk easterly breeze sprang up in the morning, and blew freshly all day. In the evening the sky clouded in, and there were one or two slight showers, but nothing to wet the ground.

Thursday, May 30.—Reached the dépôt this morning, at eleven o'clock. No traces of any one except blacks having been here since we left. Deposited some journals, and a notice of our

present condition. Started back in the afternoon, and camped at the first waterhole. Last night being cloudy, was unusually warm and pleasant.

Friday, May 31.—Decamped at thirty minutes past seven, having first breakfasted. Passed between the sand-hills at nine, and reached the blanket mia-mias at twenty minutes to eleven; from there proceeded on to the rocks, where I arrived at half-past one, having delayed about half-an-hour on the road in gathering some portulac. It had been a fine morning, but the sky now became overcast, and threatened to set in for a steady rain; and as I felt very weak and tired I only moved on about a mile further, and camped in a sheltered gully, under some bushes. Night clear and very cold. No wind. Towards morning sky became slightly overcast with cirro str. clouds.

Saturday, June 1.—Started at a quarter to eight a.m. Passed the duck-holes at ten a.m., and my second camp up at two p.m., having rested in the meantime about forty-five minutes. Thought to have reached the blacks' camp, or at least where Lands was bogged, but found myself altogether too weak and exhausted; in fact, had extreme difficulty in getting across the numerous little gullies, and was at last obliged to camp, from sheer fatigue. Night ultimately clear and cloudy, with occasional showers.

Sunday, June 2.—Started at half-past six, thinking to breakfast at the blacks' camp, below Lands's grave; found myself very much fagged, and did not arrive at their camp until ten a.m., and then found myself disappointed as to a good breakfast, the camp being deserted. Having rested awhile, and eaten a few fish-bones, I moved down the creek, hoping by a late march to be able to reach our own camp, but I soon found, from my extreme weakness, that that would be out of the question. A certain amount of good luck, however, still stuck to me, for, on going along by a large waterhole, I was so fortunate as to find a large fish, about a pound and a-half in weight, which was just being choked by another which it had tried to swallow, but which had stuck in its throat. I soon had a fire lit, and both of the fish cooked and eaten. The large one was in good condition. Moving on again after my late breakfast, I passed Camp 67 of the journey to Carpentaria, and camped for the night under some polygonum bushes.

Monday, June 3.—Started at seven o'clock, and, keeping on the south bank of the creek, was rather encouraged, at about three miles, by the sound of numerous crows a-head; presently fancied I could see smoke, and was shortly afterwards set at my ease by hearing a cooey from Pitchery, who stood on the opposite bank, and directed me around the lower end of the waterhole, continually repeating his assurance of abundance of fish and bread. Having with some considerable difficulty managed to ascend the sandy path that led to the camp, I was conducted by the chief to a fire, where a large pile of fish were just being cooked in the most approved style. These I imagined to be for the general consumption of the half a dozen natives gathered around, but it turned out that they had already had their breakfast. I was expected to dispose of this lot—a task which, to my own astonishment, I soon accomplished, keeping two or three blacks pretty steadily at work extracting the

bones for me. The fish being disposed of, next came a supply of nardoo cake and water, until I was so full as to be unable to eat any more, when Pitchery allowing me a short time to recover myself, fetched a large bowl of the raw nardoo flour, mixed to a thin paste—a most insinuating article, and one that they appear to esteem a great delicacy. I was then invited to stop the night there, but this I declined, and proceeded on my way home.

Tuesday, June 4.—Started for the blacks' camp, intending to test the practicability of living with them, and to see what I could learn as to their ways and manners.

Wednesday, June 5.—Remained with the blacks. Light rain during the greater part of the night, and more or less throughout the day, in showers. Wind blowing in squalls from S.

Thursday, June 6.—Returned to our own camp, found that Mr. Burke and King had been well supplied with fish by the blacks. Made preparation for shifting our camp nearer to theirs on the morrow.

Friday, June 7.—Started in the afternoon for the blacks' camp with such things as we could take found ourselves all very weak, in spite of the abundant supply of fish that we have lately had. I myself could scarcely get along, although carrying the lightest swag—only about thirty pounds. Found that the blacks had decamped, so determined on proceeding to-morrow up to the next camp, near the nardoo field.

Saturday, June 8.—With the greatest fatigue and difficulty we reached the nardoo camp. No blacks, greatly to our disappointment. Took possession of their best mia mia, and rested for the remainder of the day.

Sunday, June 9.—King and I proceeded to collect nardoo, leaving Mr. Burke at home.

Monday, June 10.—Mr. Burke and King collecting nardoo; self at home, too weak to go out. Was fortunate enough to shoot a crow.

[Here follow some meteorological notes, which appear to relate to another period.]

Tuesday, June 11.—King out for nardoo. Mr. Burke up the creek to look for the blacks.

Wednesday, June 12.—King out collecting nardoo. Mr. Burke and I at home, pounding and cleaning. I still feel myself, if anything, weaker in the legs, although the nardoo appears to be more thoroughly (?) digested.

Thursday, June 13.—Last night the sky was pretty clear, and the air rather cold, but nearly calm; a few cir.-st. hung about the N.E. horizon during the first part of the night. Mr. Burke and King out for nardoo. Self weaker than ever, scarcely able to go to the water hole for water. Towards afternoon cir.-cum. and cir.-st. began to appear, moving northward, scarcely any wind all day.

Friday, June 14.—Night alternately clear and cloudy, cir.-cum. and cum.-st. moving northwards; no wind, beautifully mild for the time of year; in the morning some heavy clouds on the horizon. King out for nardoo; brought in a good supply. Mr. Burke and I at home, pounding and cleaning seed. I feel weaker than ever, and both Mr. B. and King are beginning to feel very unsteady in the legs.

Saturday, June 15.—Night clear, calm, and cold; morning very fine, with a light breath of air from N.E. King out for nardoo; brought in

a fine supply. Mr. Burke and I pounding and cleaning. He finds himself getting very weak, and I am not a bit stronger. I have determined on beginning to chew tobacco and eat less nardoo, in hopes that it may induce some change in the system. I have never yet recovered from the effects of the constipation, and the passage of the stools is always exceedingly painful.

Sunday, June 16.—Wind shifted to N., clouds moving from W. to E.; thunder audible two or three times to the southward; sky becoming densely overcast, with an occasional shower about nine a.m. We finished up the remains of the Rajah for dinner yesterday. King was fortunate enough to shoot a crow this morning. The rain kept all hands in pounding and cleaning seed during the morning. The weather cleared up towards the middle of the day, and a brisk breeze sprang up in the south, lasting till near sunset, but rather irregular in its force. Distant thunder was audible to westward and southward frequently during the afternoon.

Monday, June 17.—Night very boisterous and stormy. Northerly wind blowing in squalls, and heavy showers of rain, with thunder in the north and west. Heavy clouds moving rapidly from north to south; gradually clearing up during the morning, the wind continuing squally during the day from W. and N.W. King out in the afternoon for nardoo.

Tuesday, June 18.—Exceedingly cold night. Sky clear, slight breeze, very chilly, and changeable; very heavy dew. After sunrise, cir.-st. clouds began to pass over from west to east, gradually becoming more dense, and assuming the form of cum.-st. The sky cleared, and it became warmer towards noon.

Wednesday, June 19.—Night calm; sky during first part overcast with cir.-cum. clouds, most of which cleared away towards morning, leaving the air much colder, but the sky remained more or less hazy all night, and it was not nearly as cold as last night. About eight o'clock a strong southerly wind sprang up, which enabled King to blow the dust out of our nardoo seeds, but made me too weak to render him any assistance.

Thursday, June 20.—Night and morning very cold, sky clear. I am completely reduced by the effects of the cold and starvation. King gone out for nardoo. Mr. Burke at home pounding seed; he finds himself getting very weak in the legs. King holds out by far the best; the food seems to agree with him pretty well. Finding the sun come out pretty warm towards noon, I took a sponging all over, but it seemed to do little good beyond the cleaning effects, for my weakness is so great that I could not do it with proper expedition. I cannot understand this nardoo at all; it certainly will not agree with me in any form. We are now reduced to it alone, and we manage to get from four to five pounds per day between us. The stools it causes are enormous, and seem greatly to exceed the quantity of bread consumed, and is very slightly altered in appearance from what it was when eaten.

Friday, June 21.—Last night was cold and clear, winding up with a strong wind from N.E. in the morning. I feel much weaker than ever, and can scarcely crawl out of the mia-mia. Unless relief comes in some form or other, I cannot possibly last more than a fortnight. It is a great

consolation, at least, in this position of ours, to know that we have done all we could, and that our deaths will rather be the result of the mismanagement of others than of any rash acts of our own. Had we come to grief elsewhere, we could only have blamed ourselves; but here we are, returned to Cooper's Creek, where we had every reason to look for provisions and clothing; and yet we have to die of starvation, in spite of the explicit instructions given by Mr. Burke, that the depot party should await our return, and the strong recommendation to the committee that we should be followed up by a party from Menindie. About noon a change of wind took place, and it blew almost as hard from the west as it did previously from the N.E. A few cir. cum. continued to pass over towards east.

Saturday, June 22.—Night cloudy and warm. Every appearance of rain. Thunder once or twice during the night. Clouds moving in an easterly direction. Lower atmosphere perfectly calm. There were a few drops of rain during the night, and in the morning, about nine a.m., there was every prospect of more rain until towards noon, when the sky cleared up for a time. Mr. Burke and King cut for nardoo. The former returned much fatigued. I am so weak to-day as to be unable to get on my feet.

Sunday, June 23.—All hands at home. I am so weak as to be incapable of crawling out of the mia-mia. King holds out well, but Mr. Burke finds himself weaker every day.

Monday, June 24.—A fearful night. At about an hour before sunset, a southerly gale sprang up and continued throughout the greater portion of the night; the cold was intense, and it seemed as if one would be shrivelled up. Towards morning, it fortunately lulled a little, but a strong cold breeze continued till near sunset, after which it became perfectly calm. King went out for nardoo, in spite of the wind, and came in with a good load, but he himself terribly out. He says that he can no longer keep up the work, and as he and Mr. Burke are both getting rapidly weaker, we have but a slight chance of anything but starvation, unless we can get hold of some blacks.

Tuesday, June 25 (*sic*).—Night calm, clear, and intensely cold, especially towards morning. Near daybreak, King reported seeing a moon in the E., with a haze of light stretching up from it, he declared it to be quite as large as the moon, and not dim at the edges. I am so weak that any attempt to get a sight of it was out of the question; but I think it must have been Venus in the zodiacal light that he saw, with a corona around her. Mr. Burke and King remain at home cleaning and pounding seed. They are both getting weaker every day. The cold plays the deuce with us, from the small amount of clothing we have. My wardrobe consists of a wide-awake, a merino shirt, a regatta shirt without sleeves, the remains of a pair of flannel trousers, two pairs of socks in rags, and a waistcoat of which I have managed to keep the pockets together. The others are no better off. Besides these we have between us for bedding, two small camel pads, some horsehair, two or three little bits of rag, and pieces of oilcloth saved from the fire. The day turned out nice and warm.

Wednesday, June 26 (*sic*).—Calm night; sky overcast with heavy cum. strat. clouds. An

easterly breeze sprang up towards morning, making the air much colder. After sunrise there were indications of a clearing up of the sky, but it soon clouded in again, the upper current continuing to move in an easterly direction, whilst a breeze from the E. and N.E. blew pretty regularly throughout the day. Mr. Burke and King are preparing to go up the creek in search of the blacks. They will leave me some nardoo, wood and water, with which I must do the best I can until they return. I think this is almost our only chance. I feel myself, if anything, rather better, but I cannot say stronger. The nardoo is beginning to agree better with me; but without some change I see little chance for any of us. They have both shown great hesitation and reluctance with regard to leaving me, and have repeatedly desired my candid opinion in the matter. I could only repeat, however, that I considered it our only chance, for I could not last long on the nardoo, even if a supply could be kept up.

Thursday, June 25 (*sic*).—Cloudy, calm, and comparatively warm night, clouds almost stationary. In the morning a gentle breeze from east. Sky partially cleared up during the day, making it pleasantly warm and bright, it remained clear during the afternoon and evening, offering every prospect of a clear cold night.

Friday, June 26 (*sic*).—Clear cold night, slight breeze from the E., day beautifully warm and pleasant. Mr. Burke suffers greatly from the cold, and is getting extremely weak; he and King start to-morrow up the creek, to look for the blacks—it is the only chance we have of being saved from starvation. I am weaker than ever although I have a good appetite, and relish the nardoo much, but it seems to give us no nutriment, and the birds here are so shy as not to be got at. Even if we got a good supply of fish, I doubt whether we could do much work on them and the nardoo alone. Nothing now but the greatest good luck can now save any of us; and as for myself, I may live four or five days if the weather continues warm. My pulse are at forty-eight, and very weak, and my legs and arms are nearly akin and bone. I can only look out, like Mr. Micawber, "for something to turn up;" but starvation on nardoo is by no means very unpleasant, but for the weakness one feels, and the utter inability to move oneself, for as far as appetite is concerned, it gives me the greatest satisfaction. Certainly, fat and sugar would be more to one's taste, in fact, those seem to me to be the great stand by for one in this extraordinary continent; not that I mean to depreciate the farinaceous food, but the want of sugar and fat in all substances obtainable here is so great that they become almost valueless to us as articles of food, without the addition of something else.

(Signed)

W. J. WILLS.

#### MR. BURKE'S NOTES.

The following extracts are from the memorandum-book of Mr. Burke:—

Mr. Archer, to whom the task of transcribing it was intrusted, writes the following preface:—"I went carefully through Burke's note-book last night. It is an ordinary memorandum-book,

with a clasp, and a side-pocket for a pencil. It is much dilapidated, and several of the leaves are torn out; some so torn had been written on. I have numbered these consecutively throughout. The following is a copy, letter for letter and word for word, of all that remains of Burke's pencillings. I have queried all doubtful points:—

No. 69.—Line of our i n g (?) on bags, 1, 4, 19, 20, 11, 3. Think well before giving an answer, and never speak except from strong convictions.

16th December.—Left depôt 65; followed by the creek.

17th.—The same. 66.

18 h.—The same. 67.

19th.—We made a (?) small creek, supposed to be Otta Era (?), or in the immediate neighbourhood of it. Good water. Camp 69.

20th.—Made a creek, where we found a great many natives. They presented us with fish, and offered their women. Camp 70.

21st.—Made another creek, camp 71. Splendid water, fine feed for the camels; would be a very good place for a station. Since we have left Cooper's Creek we have travelled over a fine sheep grazing country, well watered, and in every respect well suited for occupation.

22nd December, 1860.—Camp 72. Encamped on the borders of the desert.

23rd.—Travelled day and night, and encamped in the night in the bed of a creek, as we supposed we were near water.

24th.—Encamped on the morning of this day on the banks of Gray's Creek, called after him because he was detached on horseback from the party, and found it good water. The third day without it. Now for a retrospective glance: We started from Cooper's Creek, Camp 66, with the intention of going through to Eyre's Creek without water. Loaded with 800 pints of water; four riding camels carried 130 pints, each horse 150, two pack camels 50 each, and 5 pints each man.

25th, Christmas Day.—Started at four a.m. from Gray's Creek, and arrived at a creek which appears to be quite as large as Cooper's Creek. At two p.m. Golab Sing gave some very decided hints about stopping by lying down under the trees. Splendid prospect.

26th Dec., 27th Dec., 28th Dec., 29th Dec.—Followed up the creek until it took a turn to the south-east, which I thought rather too much to put up with, therefore left it on the morning of the 30th December, 12.30, on the road started at seven o'clock, travelled eleven hours. 31st, started at 2.20 sixteen and a-half hours on the road, travelled thirteen and a-half hours.

1st January.—Water.

2nd January.—From King's Creek, eleven hours on the road. Started at seven, travelled nine and a-half hours; desert.

3rd January.—Five started; travelled twelve hours no minutes.

4th.—Twelve hours on the road.

5th.—Water at Wills' or King's Creek. It is impossible to say the time we were up, for we had to load the camels, to pack and feed them,

to watch them and the horse, and to look for water; but I am satisfied that the frame of man never was more severely taxed. [Then follows an entry for March 28th, commencing thus, "March 28.—At the conclusion of"—Then some of the leaves appear to have been torn out from pages 43 to 55.]

13th January, 1860.—As I find it impossible to keep a regular diary, I shall jot down my ideas when I have an opportunity and put the date. Upon two occasions, at Cooper's Creek and at King's Creek, on New Year's day, whenever the natives tried to bully or bounce us and were repulsed, although the leaders appeared to be in earnest, the followers, and particularly the young ones, laughed heartily and seemed to be amused at their leaders' repulse. The old fellow at King's Creek who stuck his spear into the ground and threw dust in the air, when I fired off my pistol, ran off in the most undignified manner. Names for places:—Thackeray, Barry, Bindon, Lyons, Forbes, Archer, Bennet, Colles, O. S. Nicholson, Wood, Wrixon, Cope, Turner, Scratchley, Ligar, Griffith, Green, Roe, Hamilton, Archer, Colles.

18th January.—Still on the ranges; the camels sweating profusely from fear.

20th January.—I determined to-day to go straight at the ranges, and so far the experiment has succeeded well. The poor camels sweating and groaning, but we gave them a hot bath in Turner's Creek, which seemed to relieve them very much. At last through—the camels bleeding, sweating, and groaning. [Leaves 35 to 39 torn out, and eight leaves preceding torn out, no marks of writing visible on the remnants. Leaves 24 to 35, both inclusive, blank on both sides.]

28th March.—At the conclusion of report, it would be well to say that we reached the sea, but we could not obtain a view of the open ocean, although we made every endeavour to do so.

Leaving Carpentaria.—Flour, 83lb.; pork, 31b.; D. meat, 35lb.; biscuits, 12lb.; rice, 12lb.; sugar, 10lb. [Page 15 blank.]—Return party from Carpentaria arrived here last night, and found that the D. party had started on the same day. We proceed slowly down the creek towards Adelaide by Mount Hopeless, and shall endeavour to follow Gregory's track; but we are very weak, the camels are done up, and we shall not be able to travel faster than five miles a day at most. Gray died on the road, from hunger and fatigue. We all suffered much from hunger, but the provisions left here will, I think, restore our strength. We have discovered a practicable route to Carpentaria, the principal portion of which lies in the 140th meridian of east longitude. Between this and the Stony Desert there is some good country from there to the tropic. The country is dry and stony between the tropic and Carpentaria. A considerable portion is rangy, but it is well watered and richly grassed. [Pages 20 and 21 torn, no writing apparent. Pages 22 and 23 contain a memorandum of stores, but without any particular reference to time and place.]

# BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES.

*From the "Examiner."*

## ROBERT O'HARA BURKE.

One of our daily contemporaries has obtained some slight particulars of the previous career of the lamented gentlemen whose names have become household words throughout these colonies, which, in default of fuller and more certain information, possess considerable interest. From them we gather that the leader of the expedition was born at St. Clerans, Galway, Ireland, and was in his fortieth year of age when he died. "He was partly educated at home, and afterwards, for the higher studies, in Belgium. Subsequently he entered the Radetzky regiment of Hungarian Hussars in the Austrian service. Here he displayed great assiduity in military studies, soon came to be regarded as a most efficient cavalry officer, and at an early period obtained a captaincy. The eventful political changes of that year of continental disquietude, 1848, led to Mr. BURKE's relinquishing the Austrian service. Afterwards we hear of him as holding a command in the Irish mounted constabulary, when he was for some time stationed in Dublin. On resigning this office to emigrate, he received several very flattering testimonials, demonstrating that at that time, as continually since, he had the ability to secure the respect and esteem of his companions and fellow-officers. Mr. BURKE arrived at Hobart Town in 1853, but appears to have soon proceeded to Melbourne, where he at once obtained an appointment as acting-inspector of police, under Mr. MITCHELL. In this capacity he remained till the close of 1853, when he was transferred to a command at Carlsruhe. In 1854 he was advanced to the Beechworth district, to relieve Mr. PRICE,

the police magistrate, and with a step in promotion to the post of district inspector. During the progress of the Crimean war Mr. BURKE obtained leave of absence to enable him to visit England, where he hoped, with the interest he possessed, to have been enabled to share the glory and the peril of the grand struggle then existing between Russia and the Allied Powers. In this hope he was disappointed by the termination of the war, upon which he returned to this colony and re-assumed his command in our mounted police force. In 1858 Mr. BURKE was removed to Castlemaine," where he was stationed when he obtained the appointment of leader of the Victorian Exploring Expedition. From the moment it became probable that he would be selected to fill this responsible post BURKE is said to have "diligently prepared himself for it. He at once commenced an active examination of the records of previous explorers, so as to become thoroughly acquainted with the personal experiences of Australian pioneers of discovery, and well informed as to the actual knowledge of the interior and remote coasts already on record. He likewise entered upon a course of regular training, taking severe pedestrian exercise, and accustoming himself to fatigue and privation of every possible kind that an attempt to traverse the vast untrodden wilds of Australia was likely to bring to his experience."

## WILLIAM JOHN WILLS.

Of WILLS, the sharer of BURKE's perils, sufferings, and glory, we are informed that "his father was a physician at Totness, in Devonshire, and WILLS was designed to pur-



sue the study of the same profession. With this object in view, he sought with ardour, as a pupil of his father, the attainment of the various branches of knowledge required in this profession, and for four years exhibited the most unremitting application to such studies. In chemistry and the experience of the medical schools he became specially distinguished for proficiency. He had received an excellent academical education at the grammar school of Ashburton,—a public school of note, as being endowed with scholarships by the famous WILLIAM GIFFORD, and also by Dr. IRELAND, Dean of Westminster." WILLS arrived in this colony in 1853, and at first obtained a situation at the Royal Bank Station, Denillquin. His father emigrated the succeeding year, and settled at Ballarat, where WILLS assisted him for a time in his profession. Subsequently, he "obtained employment in the service of the Government as an officer in the Survey Department, under Mr. BYERLEY, and there displayed his characteristic assiduity and proficiency. Having acquired a knowledge of and interest in astronomical and other

sciences to which the Observatory is devoted, he obtained, through the recommendation of Mr. LIGAR, the Surveyor-General, a situation as assistant in that establishment. Here he remained for two years, when the opportunity presented itself of offering to join the Exploring Expedition."

WILLS, it appears, had long entertained a strong wish to be connected with such an enterprise. "So long ago as 1855 he frequently spoke, as many of his friends can recollect, of a longing desire to explore the interior of Australia. He also expressed at this time a belief that he should be among the first who ever should succeed in crossing to the Gulf of Carpentaria. In 1856 there was a proposal brought before the public by a Dr. CATHERWOOD to explore the interior of this country. This project, however, was abandoned; but WILLS, who happened to be then on the River Wannon, immediately on chancing to hear of it walked to Ballarat, a distance of ninety miles, in his anxiety to join the proposed expedition."

He was twenty-seven years of age at the time of his melancholy yet glorious death.

## THE HEROES OF THE VICTORIAN EXPEDITION.

The deeds and the death of the Victorian Explorers continue to monopolize the attention of the public, and, as a matter of course, much has been written and uttered concerning them so essentially—though unintentionally—mean and paltry, that for the moment the grandeur of the enterprise, the success of which has been so dearly purchased, is almost overborne by the mass of puerility and littleness to which the subject has given birth. Fortunately, the work which BURKE and WILLS accomplished, and the heroism they displayed, are so intrinsically magnificent, that they cannot be permanently dwarfed by any amount of babble and triviality which men of narrower minds may indulge in concerning them. It is a pity, however, to see that the true-hearted sentiment of mingled mournfulness and triumph which was at first universally displayed on

behalf of the Victorian explorers is in danger of being frittered away in sham hero-worship and unmerited eulogium. The feeling which seemed at the outset to have resulted in a settled purpose to do fitting honour to the two whose names have been inseparably linked together, and to reward the survivor—who undoubtedly performed his part as nobly as his leaders—has been partially directed towards other objects not nearly so worthy. BURKE and WILLS demand all the honour which the country can give. There may be regret for others, and praise for others; but of public honour the remains of the two who were *the* Victorian explorers should receive all that this colony can bestow. Let it be remembered that it is their deeds which have shed glory over this expedition, and awakened the sentiment which it is now sought to mis-

direct. Had they failed to reach the Gulf of Carpentaria, and been discovered alive and well in some remote portion of the settled districts of this continent, would the public have burned to do honour to those whose deaths had given solemnity to the failure? It is not to men who proved themselves too weak for the task they undertook, and sank on the threshold, nor yet to one who was accidentally the companion of the explorers, but who seemed to the hour of his death to have no heart in the work, that pœans and elegies should be chanted; it is to those whom posterity will reverence that all the glory that we can render should be consecrated. Let us not make a mistake about our heroes, and render our epoch ridiculous in coming time.

That all the honour we can pay the memories of BURKE and WILLS will seem short of what they deserve in the eyes of the outer world, and of succeeding generations, we thoroughly believe. The BURKE and WILLS Exploration will stand out in the future far above all preceding and cotemporary enterprises, and the more remote the time the more completely will it be isolated. Other adventurers may have been as brave and worthy, but they did not place a track across the continent of Australia from south to north, and satisfy the long-standing and oft-reiterated demand of modern science and investigation. Who bethinks him now of those who before VASCO DA GAMA essayed to round the African Cape, or before COLUMBUS to discover a western world? And by-and-bye what will be known of the predecessors of M'CLINTOCK in the task of navigating the north-western passage? It is the same with the crossing of this continent; those who were the first to accomplish it will be the

world's immortals, whatever feeble efforts we may make to obtain a portion of their well-earned fame for others. The feat they have performed may or may not be turned to profitable account during the current year or generation, but that does not affect the issue. Neither do the multifarious blunders and disasters by which it has been accompanied. These may be sad affairs to us, but they will not greatly affect foreigners, who, it has been said, generally indicate, with correctness, what will be the opinion of posterity in one's own nation.

That others besides BURKE and WILLS have acted bravely and perished sadly in this expedition is not to be gainsaid; but this appears to us to be beside the question when the honour of a public record, a public funeral, and a public monument comes to be decreed. If these symbols of mortal glory be accorded to second and third rate men, how shall we signify our appreciation of the highest and noblest? It is true that GRAY accompanied BURKE and WILLS to the Gulf of Carpentaria, but have we any good grounds for supposing that he performed his duties more nobly and courageously than most men in his position would have done? So far as our information goes, are we not led irresistibly to a contrary conclusion? It is true that BECKER, PURCELL, PATTEN, and STONE died because of this expedition; the fact is a terrible and grievous one. But there is no triumph connected with their deaths. They had not struggled and conquered for their duty's sake. All the fame which the colony will gain by this expedition it owes to BURKE and WILLS. Let it not evince blindness in the act of paying its debt of gratitude.





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